

INSTRUCTIONS

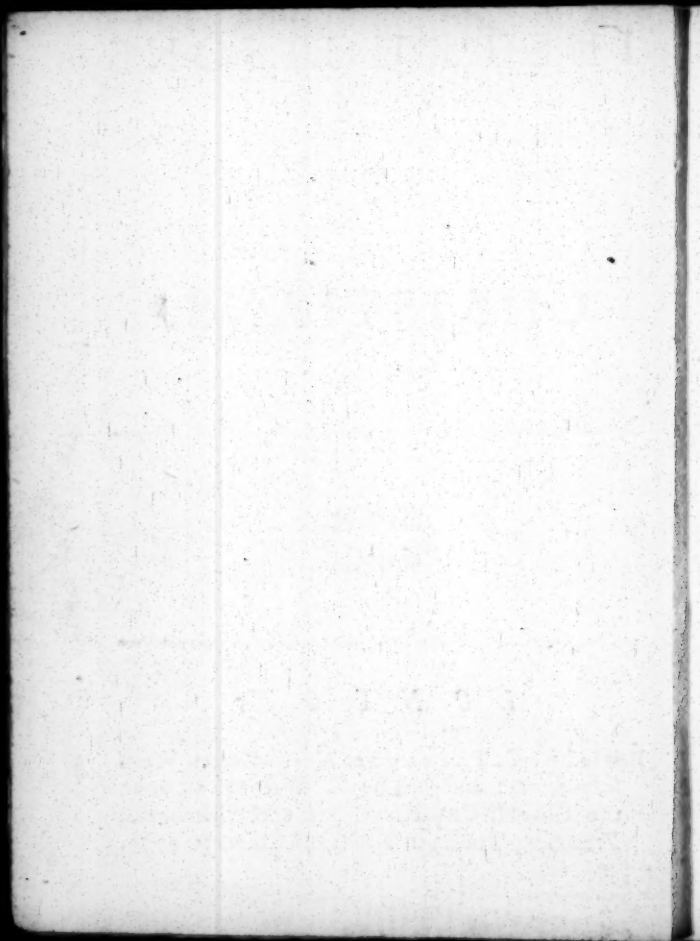
F O R

CHRISTIANS.



L O N D O N:

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I N S T R U C T I O N S

F O R

CHRISTIANS.

S E C T I O N I.

L E S S O N I. and II.

Of G O D.

1. **H**OW many Gods are there? One :
who is God the Father, God the
Son, and God the Holy Ghost. These three
are one.

2. What is God?

A. Spirit.

A 2

3 What

3. What do you mean by a spirit?

One that cannot be seen or felt.

4. What sort of a spirit is God?

One that always was, and always will be.

5. Where is God?

Every where.

6. What does God know?

Every thing.

7. What can God do?

Whatever he will,

8. Does God love you?

Yes: he loves every thing which he has made.

9. What has God made?

Every thing, and in particular man.

L E S S O N III. and IV.

Of the Creation and Fall of Man.

1. How did God make man?

His body out of the dust, his soul out of nothing.

2. Why did God make man?

To

To know, love, and be happy in God for ever.

3. Where did God put the first man and woman?

In the garden of paradise.

4. What command did he give them there?

Not to eat of the tree in the midst of the garden.

5. Did they keep that command?

No, they did eat of it.

6. What hurt did they bring on themselves thereby?

Sin and guilt, pain and death.

7. Did their sin hurt any beside themselves?

Yes; all men that came from them.

8. How did it hurt *them*?

They are all born in sin and guilt, and subject to pain and death.

9. How are men born in sin?

We are all born proud, self-willed, lovers of the world, and not lovers of God.

LESSON V. VI. and VII.

Of the Redemption of Man.

1. By whom are we to be saved from sin?
By Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God.

2. What did he do to save us?

He was made man, and lived and died,
and rose again.

3. What may we gain by his living and
dying for us?

Forgiveness of sins, and holiness, and hea-
ven.

4. When does God forgive our sins?

When we repent and believe in Christ.

5. What do you mean by repenting?

Being thoroughly convinced of our sinful-
ness, guilt, and helplessness.

6. What is believing, or faith?

A conviction of those unseen things which
God has told us in the Bible.

7. What is faith in Christ?

A conviction that Christ loved *me*, and
given himself for *me*.

8. By whom is this wrought in us?

By

By the Holy Ghost.

9. What is holiness?

The love of God, and of all mankind for God's sake.

10. Is he that believes and loves God, saved from sin?

Yes: from all sinful tempers and words and works.

11. How is he saved from pride?

He is little and mean, and base and vile in his own eyes.

12. How is he saved from self-will?

His heart continually says, "Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

13. How is he saved from the love of the world?

He desires nothing but God.

14. How is he saved from sinful words?

His words always spring from the grace of God, and are fit to minister grace to the hearers.

15. How is he saved from sinful works?

By the spirit of God which dwelleth in him: whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, it is all to the glory of God.

L E S S O N VIII. and IX.

Of the Means of Grace.

1. What is grace ?

The power of the Holy Ghost, enabling us to believe, and love, and serve God.

2. How are we to seek this ?

In a constant and careful use of the means of grace.

3. Which are the chief means of grace ?

The Lord's supper, prayer, searching the scriptures, and fasting.

4. How oft n did the first Christians receive the Lord's supper ?

Every day : it was their *daily bread*.

5. How often did they join in public prayer ?

Twice a day, as many of them as could.

6. How often did they use private prayer ?

Every morning and night at least.

7. How did they search the scriptures ?

They heard or read them every day ; and meditated therein day and night.

8. How often did the old Christians fast ?

Every

Every *Wednesday* and *Friday* till three in the afternoon.

9. How long is every Christian to use all these means of grace ?

To his life's end.

LESSON X. and XI.

Of Hell.

1. Where do unbelievers go after death ?
To hell.

2. What sort of a place is hell ?

It is a dark and bottomless pit, full of fire and brimstone.

3. How will they spend their time there ?

In weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

4. Will both their souls and bodies be tormented ?

Yes: every part of them at once.

5. How will their bodies be tormented ?

By a sense of the wrath of God; by pride, self-will, malice, and envy; by grief, desire, fear, rage, and despair.

7. Who will be their tormentors ?

Their

Their own conscience, the devils, and one another.

8. But will they have no rest from torment ?

No, not for one moment, day or night.

9. How long will their torments last ?

For ever and ever.

L E S S O N XII.

Of Heaven.

1. Where will believers go after death ?

To heaven.

2. What sort of a place is heaven ?

A place of light and glory.

3. How will good men live there ?

In joy and happiness, greater than they can now desire or think.

4. Will they suffer nothing there ?

No. They will have no want, or pain, or sin.

5. What sort of bodies will they have then ?

Spiritual bodies, swifter than lightning, and brighter than the sun.

6. But

6. But wherein will their chief happiness lie?

In the enjoyment of God.

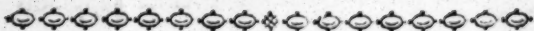
7. How will they enjoy God?

They will know, and love, and see God, face to face.

8. How long will this happiness last?

As long as God lives, that is, for ever and ever. Lord! bring me thither! *Amen.*





S E C T I O N II.

L E S S O N I.

Of God, and of the soul of Man.

TAKE care you do not draw nigh to God with your lips while your heart is far from him.

Never say any thing to God which you do not mean.

Do not dare to tell a lie to God, for he sees all that is in your heart.

Do you know who God is?

If you do not know God, how can you hope to please God?

Think on this. Mind it well, for God is here. He minds you, if you do not mind him.

L E S S O N II.

God is an *eternal* Spirit, without beginning and without ending.

He

He cannot be seen, or fully known by man.

He is *good*, and all good comes from him.

He has *power* to do whatever he will.

He is *wise*, knowing all things, and doing all things well.

He is *happy*, and cannot want any thing.

He *loves* all things which he has made, and man above all.

It is his will, That all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of his truth.

He is *just*, to give to every man according to his works.

He is *true* in his promises, and in his threatnings.

He is *merciful*, forgiving the sins of those who truly repent and believe.

L E S S O N III.

No man hath seen God at any time. The Son of God who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him unto us.

No one knoweth the Son of God, but the Father; and no one knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. All

All our reading, and the things we hear, either at church or any where else, cannot reveal God unto us.

All the men in the world cannot give us the least spark of the true knowledge of God, or of the things of God.

Only God himself can do this, by giving us his good Spirit.

He gives his grace and his light to those who earnestly pray for it.

He declares himself to those who do his will, so far as they know it already.

L E S S O N IV.

There is none good but One, that is God.

Every thing that is good, comes from God alone, whether it be in heaven or in earth.

If there be any thing good in any man, it all comes from God.

Therefore he alone ought to be praised for it all.

All that we do without him, without his grace and his help, is evil.

Without God we can do nothing that is good.

He

He that has not God, has nothing that is good: and is more unhappy than any words can tell.

LESSON V.

I know that God has power to keep what I commit to him, safe unto that day.

Our souls are now spoiled and destroyed by sin.

None can save us from our sins but God who has all power.

Let us commit our souls wholly to him, to do with them what he will, and as he will.

Then he will keep us by his power, and defend us against every thing that would hurt us.

He is able to deliver us from all danger, and to keep our souls unto that great day.

And at that day he will restore in glory both our bodies and souls, and all that we had committed to his charge.

LESSON VI.

Do you know what your soul is?

You have in you (though you cannot see it) a soul that will never die.

God made this, that he might come and dwell in it.

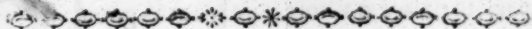
If God lives and dwells in your soul, then he makes it like himself.

He makes the soul in which he dwells, good, wise, just, true, full of life and of power to do well.

He makes it happy. For it is his will that your soul should rejoice in him for ever. He made it for this very thing.

When a soul desires God, and knows and enjoys him, then it is truly happy.

But when a soul does not desire God, nor enjoy him, it is truly miserable.



S E C T I O N III.

L E S S O N I.

How to regulate our Desires.

THE gate by which God, of his holy grace, comes into us, is the *desire* of the soul.

This is often called, the *heart* or the *will*.

Unless our desire be toward God, we cannot please him.

All our knowledge without God does but make us more like the devil.

The desire is to the soul, what the mouth and the stomach are to the body.

It is by the mouth and the stomach that the body receives its nourishment whether good or bad.

That our body may live, we must take care to put nothing but what is good into our mouth or stomach.

.B

And

And that our soul may live, we must take care to desire nothing but what is good.

L E S S O N II.

Desire was made for that which is good, that is, for God, who is the only good, and for his will, from which every good thing flows.

We ought to desire nothing but God, and that which is according to his holy will.

And we ought to turn our desire from every thing beside.

For every thing beside God and his will, is evil.

Therefore no man ought to follow his own will.

As the will of God is the spring of all good, so our own will is the spring of all evil.

Take care not to use yourself to do your own will.

No soul can ever be saved unless it renounces its own will, and its own desires.

Father, let not my will be done but thine.

We

We came into the world, not to do our own will, but the will of him that sent us.

If we are already accustomed to do our own will, we must break that custom without delay.

O Lord, save us from our own will, or we perish.

L E S S O N III.

No one can do any thing good of himself, without the help of God.

All our own desires are only evil continually.

Therefore no man should desire to be esteemed, honoured, or praised by any man.

And no one ought to praise or esteem himself.

Rather, we ought to despise ourselves; and we ought to desire to be thought by others, what we really are, that is poor, weak, foolish, sinful creatures.

Then should we find help from God. For he resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

B 2

They

They who teach children to love praise, train them up for the devil.

Praise is a deadly poison to the soul : therefore never praise any one to his face.

Do not plant either in him or yourself that pride of heart, which is an abomination to the Lord.

L E S S O N IV.

You are of yourself nothing but sin, and deserve nothing but hell.

Therefore you ought to be content, though you should have little or nothing in the world.

And you ought not to desire any thing more than you have ; for you have now more than you deserve.

Chuse therefore the worst and meanest things ; for even these are too good for such a sinner.

To raise any other desires in your heart, is to prepare you for hell-fire.

They that give you fine clothes, are giving your soul to the devil.

They that humour you do not love you.

If

If your father and mother give you every thing that you like, they are the worst enemies you have in the world :

By doing this, they make you slaves to the flesh, to vanity and corrupt on :

And so keep you as far from the spirit of Christ, as the devil himself can wish.

L E S S O N V.

God is power, wisdom, goodness itself.

Therefore we should desire to praise and honour him as he deserves, and to please him in every thing.

The end for which we were born is to praise and honour God.

And this we may do without ceasing, by continually lifting up our hearts to him.

This is the continual employment of the angels of God in heaven.

They sing day and night to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts ! let all the earth be full of thy glory.

L E S S O N VI.

God is continually helping us and pouring his benefits upon us.

All things come from him, our soul, our body, our life, our parents, our friends, and the good angels that guard us

The earth on which we tread, the air we breathe, the sun which shines upon us, the food that keeps us alive, the clothes that cover us, the fire that warms us, are all from him.

Therefore we should thank God for all these things, and for every one of them.

We ought to be thankful, even to a man, when he does us any good.

How much more ought we to be thankful to God, who made that man, and who does us good by him !

Thou art worthy, O Lord, our God, to receive glory, and honour, and power :

Because thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

And God has not only done us all this good, but he does us more and more good, continually.

For

For without his goodness, we, and all the world, should fall into nothing in a moment.

We are just like the brittle vessel, which if it were not always upheld, would fall at once and break in pieces.

Therefore it should be our desire to be always thinking of God, because he is always blessing us.

O God, our Father, teach us to give thee thanks at all times, and for all things, through Jesus Christ !

L E S S O N VII.

Thus God has been helping us this day. And we have no less need of his help for the time to come.

Above all, if we would be happy, we have need of his blessing upon our souls.

These he gives to them who truly desire them, and none else.

Therefore let us desire of God to give us his grace, his good spirit, and the knowledge of himself.

Let us ask of him a meek and quiet spirit, a contented, humble, thankful heart.

If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and it shall be given him.

Let us then take care, not to offend him, from whom we hope to receive so great benefits.

And let us be always ready to do his will; for if any man honour God and do his will, him he heareth.

L E S S O N VIII.

But we have often offended God already, and so are unworthy of his grace and blessings.

Therefore we ought with earnest desire to ask God to forgive our past sins, for the sake of his Son, who died for us, and to keep us from them for the time to come.

These desires

1. To praise God for his power, wisdom and goodness;
2. To thank him for all his benefits;
3. To ask his grace, that so we may please him; and

4. To

4. To beg his mercy for the pardon of our sins : are what we commonly call *prayer*.

We never *pray*, but when we have really these desires in our heart.

If we say ever so many words, without having these desires, we are but like parrots before God.

Beware of this ; of drawing nigh unto God with your lips, while your heart (that is, your desire) is far from him.

L E S S O N IX.

What do you mean, when you pray to God, in the name of Jesus Christ ?

The bare saying of these words signifies nothing. It is only mocking God, if you do not know what you say.

We were all under the wrath and under the curse of God, when Jesus Christ the Son of God died for us.

And for his sake, if we truly believe in him, God is now reconciled to us.

Therefore all our trust should be in Jesus Christ, whenever we pray to God for any thing.

For

For God would not hear us at all, but for the sake of the blood of Christ shed for us.

Therefore we ought to pray always with an eye to him, looking unto Jesus.

And our desires should all spring from his grace, and be agreeable to his desires.

Then he offers our desires, as his own, to God his Father, before whose throne he stands.

And God can refuse nothing to the desires and merits of his well-beloved Son.

When therefore you pray in the name of Jesus Christ, it is as if you should say,

“Lord, I offer thee the desires which are wrought in me by the grace of Jesus Christ.

I pray, that thou wilt unite them to the desires of thy Son, and regard them as his, who is pleading for me.

And grant me what I thus desire, for his sake, for thine own glory, and my salvation.”

L E S S O N X.

Pray to God in such words as come from your heart : it may be such as these :

“My

"My God thou art good ; thou art wise :
thou art powerful : be thou praised for ever !
Give me grace to love and obey thee.

My God, I thank thee, for making and re-
deeming me.

My God, I thank thee, for giving me meat
and clothes, and for promising to give me
thy love for ever.

My God, forgive me all my sins, and give
me thy good Spirit.

Let me believe in thee with all my heart,
and love thee with all my strength.

Let me be always looking unto Jesus
Christ, who is pleading for me at thy right-
hand.

Give me grace, not to do mine own will,
but thine.

Make me content with every thing.

The least of all the good things thou givest
me is far more than I deserve.

Give me, O Lord, a lowly heart.

Let me not think myself better than any
one.

Let me despise myself, and look upon my-
self as the very worst of all.

Let

Let me hate all praise. Thou alone, O my God, art worthy to be praised.

LESSON XI.

The best prayer in the world, is the prayer which our Lord Jesus Christ himself hath taught us.

Our Father which art in heaven, 1. Hallowed be thy name. 2. Thy kingdom come. 3. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. 4. Give us this day our daily bread, and 5. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And 6. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen!*

Do you understand what you have said now?

Do you not know, that this is no prayer, unless you speak it from your heart?

God is not pleased with your saying these words, unless there is in your heart, at the same time, a real desire, that God should be

1. Known

1. Known and esteemed. 2. Honoured and praised. 3. Obeyed by all men. 4. That he should feed your souls with his grace and his love. 5. That he should forgive your past sins, and 6. That he should keep you for the time to come, from all sin, and from the snares of the devil.





S E C T I O N IV.

L E S S O N I.

How to regulate our Understanding.

OUR understanding was made for truth, that is, for God himself, for his word and his works.

Therefore we should not desire to know any thing but God, and what he has spoken and done for his own glory.

Accordingly, lying is the most abominable of all things. The devil is a liar, and the father of it.

We should not desire to know what men say or do. It is folly and vanity.

Curiosity is good for nothing.

It fills our mind with darkness; and makes us senseless and unfit for the light of God!

What

What a loss is this, to fill those vessels with filth and dung, which were made to receive the pure light of God!

L E S S O N II.

The eye of the understanding, which should see God, is quite shut in all men since the fall.

We are born quite blind to God, and the things of God!

And it is God alone that can open the eyes of our soul, to see and know spiritual things.

We could not see or know the sun, the earth, or any other of the things of this world, if God had not given us bodily eyes.

And we can never know the things of God, if God do not restore the spiritual eyes of our soul.

This he does for those, and those only, who flee from evil, and learn to do good.

Give me understanding, O Lord, and I will keep thy law: yea, I will keep it with my whole heart.

Open

Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law.

Till God opens our eyes to see the things above, we must believe what God has told us, though we see it not.

But we must not believe what the world tells us about the things of God ; for all men who have not his spirit are blind and liars.

We must trust in God, as to those things which as yet we cannot comprehend.

And wait and desire, that he would open the eyes of our understanding, and give us his light that we may see all things clearly.

L E S S O N III.

A blind man, though he could reason ever so well, yet could not by this means, either know or see the things of the world.

And with all his reason he could have only very dark, gross, nay, and false conceptions of them.

In like manner, though all the men in the world should reason with all their might concerning them : yet could they not by this means know either God or the things of God.

Nay,

Nay, with all their reason, they could only have dark, foolish, false conceptions of them.

Before God can be known, he must give other eyes to the soul, and other light than man can give.

We may paint the sun, or fruit in a picture; but this painted sun cannot warm or give us light.

And those painted fruits cannot nourish us, nor give us any strength.

Just so we may draw pictures, as it were in our mind, of God, and of the things of God.

But these pictures can give us no true light. Neither can they nourish our souls, or give us any strength to serve God.

They are only dead shadows, cold, and empty, barren and unfruitful.

We can build nothing upon them but the wind, which serves only to puff men up, and to drive each other against the other in endless disputes, till they burst of themselves, or dash in pieces one against another.

L E S S O N IV.

Our understanding or reason, without the grace and supernatural light of God, is like a blind man, who draws wild, random pictures of things he never saw or can see.

The natural man discerneth not the things of the spirit of God.

They are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

No one knoweth the things of God, but the spirit of God; and he to whom God revealeth them by his spirit.

Offer therefore your understanding to God, with a desire to do his will only.

And pray him earnestly, to give you his light, and to open the eyes of your soul.

L E S S O N V.

Endeavour to see God in all things, and to give a reason for every thing, from the perfections of God.

For

For example. Why was the world made?
To shew the goodness, and wisdom, and
power of God.

Why do men die? Through the justice of
God.

Men having abused the life he gave, it was
just to take it away.

Why is it our duty to obey our parents?
Because it is the will of God.

Why ought we not to return evil for evil?
Because God would have us do like him;
who is continually doing good unto us, even
when we ourselves do evil.

Why may we not despise or judge of
our neighbour? Because God is the judge
of all.

Thus we should accustom ourselves to have
God always before our eyes, and to walk con-
tinually in his presence.

Thus every thing may shew us the power,
wisdom or goodness, the truth, justice or will
of God:

And so every thing may shew us the
weakness, ignorance, folly, and wickedness
of men.

L E S S O N VI.

What do you believe of God ?

I believe in God the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our
Lord ;

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin *Mary* :

Suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, was cruci-
fied, dead and buried : he descended into
hell ;

The third day he rose again from the dead ;

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on
the right hand of God the Father almighty :

From whence he shall come to judge the
quick and the dead :

I believe in the Holy Ghost,

The holy catholic church,

The communion of saints,

The forgiveness of sins,

The resurrection of the body, and the life
everlasting.

You may learn from these words, 1. To
believe in God the Father, who is powerful,
and

and wise, and good; who made you and all things visible and invisible, temporal and eternal.

You may learn, 2. To believe in God the Son, who lived and died to redeem you and all mankind;

And 3. To believe in God the Holy Ghost, who restores fallen man to the image of God in which he was made.

LESSON VII.

All which comesto this. Almighty God, the maker of all things, made man to this intent, that desiring God alone, God might fill him with his knowledge, with his love, and joy, and glory for ever.

But man turned his desire from God, and his will, and so became both guilty, wicked, and miserable.

The Son of God was made man, lived and died, and rose again, to buy forgiveness for us, and to shew us how we ought to renounce our own will and desires, and to give ourselves up to the holy will of God.

This the Holy Ghost works in us, enlightening our understanding, and filling our souls with a divine peace and joy.

Hereby we are joined again with all that is holy either in earth or heaven.

We rejoice together with them in the common salvation in the benefit and graces of Jesus Christ.

And after the body is dead and risen again we shall live together in eternal glory.

L E S S O N VIII.

We cannot now comprehend how these three are one, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

But though we do not comprehend it, yet we believe it because God hath said it.

The true knowledge of all the things of God is wrought in our souls by his Holy Spirit.

This is a saving knowledge, when it works by love, and brings us to imitate God.

So we are taught by *St. Paul*, Be ye followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love,

love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us.

For every one that loveth (saith St. *John*) is born of God, and knoweth God.

But he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

So likewise, if a man says, he knows Jesus Christ, and keeps not his commandments, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

We then savingly know God the Father, the maker of all things, when we love him with obedient reverence:

We then savingly know God the Redeemer, when we live as those whom he has bought with his blood.

And when all our tempers, and words, and actions shew, that he has redeemed us from the present evil world.

We savingly know God the Sanctifier, when we are holy as he is holy.

When he hath purified both our hearts and lives by faith, so that we continually see and love God.



S E C T I O N V.

L E S S O N I.

How to regulate our Joy.

MEN are poor, ignorant foolish sinners, that will shortly rot in the earth.

And all that is in the world, is perishable and vain, and will be destroyed by fire.

Therefore we ought by no means to place our joy and delight, on any of these things.

Neither ought we to rejoice or delight in pleasing men, who will quickly turn to dust:

Nor in being handsome or well dressed; or well provided with all things; for all this will perish for ever.

God alone is great, and good, and the giver of all good things.

Therefore we ought to rejoice and delight in him alone, and in the fulfilling of his good and holy will.

L E S.

L E S S O N II.

For example, we should rejoice that we have for our true father, an eternal and almighty God.

We should rejoice that this God has made us, to fill us with divine and eternal joy.

That is, if you believe in Jesus and do his holy will :

If we will love and obey him, and not love either the honours, riches, or pleasures, that pass away like a dream.

And this we may do by the power of his grace, by the Holy Ghost, which he is ready to give unto us.

We should rejoice that God is happy and glorious in himself, that he is greater than we can think.

That he knows every thing, and he is true in all his promises; and wise to teach and govern us well :

We should rejoice, that God alone deserves to be desired, known, loved, praised and glorified for ever.

We

We should rejoice that the Son of God took our nature upon him in order to take us with him to heaven for ever.

And that even now he will come and dwell in our heart, if we desire it, and believe in him, and do his will.

L E S S O N III.

When any thing is done according to the will of God, we ought to rejoice in it.

But when any thing is done according to our own will, we ought not to rejoice, but be sorry for it.

Therefore we ought greatly to be troubled and deeply sorry, for the sins committed against God, whether by ourselves or others :

For in sinning we follow our own will, and despise the holy will of God.

Likewise, when any one praises us, if we are wise, we should be ashamed and sorry ; and should say,

O Lord, thou art good, and thou alone. Thou alone art worthy to be praised.

O Lord it is a shameful theft for a poor creature to take to itself the esteem and praise which belongs to thee only. On

On the contrary; when we are despised or ill-used, or when we have not things as we would have, we should rejoice.

We should take all as from the hand of God, and be well content, saying unto him,

O Lord, I deserve nothing but pain and contempt; I rejoice that thy justice gives me what I deserve.

I desire to thank thee for it with all my heart, and to rejoice that thy holy will is done upon me.

It is thy will that we should be like Christ: and he was despised and hated of men.

He lived in contempt, and want, and pain. O let me rejoice to tread in his steps.

Let me be content, let me rejoice to suffer with him, that I may reign with him.

LESSON IV.

One that is sick, if he is wise, will rejoice to take a good medicine, be it ever so bitter.

Especially if he knows it is given by a wise physician, and that it will restore his bodily health.

In

In like manner, if we are wise, we shall rejoice to take what God sends us, be it ever so bitter.

For we are sure it is given us by the wise physician of our souls, in order to restore them to health and life everlasting. On the contrary.

It would be folly and madness in a sick man, to rejoice in taking the things that please his taste, though they would kill him.

And the same folly and madness it is in us, to rejoice in taking the things that please our corrupt will.

Because the end of these things is death, even the destroying of the body and soul in hell.

L E S S O N V.

When you are glad of any thing that is given you, be sure to remember, that all comes from God.

Therefore thank him for it, and think in yourself, God has a thousand times more than this to give them that love and obey him.

And

And be ready to leave all these little things, whenever it is his will.

If any say to you, "See what a pretty thing here is, Look, here is a pretty thing for you," they are fools, and know not what they do.

This is the way to make you fond of such foolish things, but if you love these, you cannot love God.

If any one ever said to you, "Did it hurt you, give me a blow for it," they were then teaching you to serve the devil.

For this was teaching you to revenge yourself; and to revenge ourselves is serving the devil.

If any one used to say to you, when you did any thing, "It was not my child, was it?" Say, "It was I."

Then they were leading you the way to hell; for all liars go to hell.

And whoever thy are that teach their children lying, pride, or revenge, they offer their sons, and daughters unto devils.

LESSON VI.

Above all, beware of the love of money :
for it is the root of all evil. Money

Money is now the god of this world. The aim of men is to get and keep this. And herein they place their welfare and joy.

This is an idolatry no less damnable than that of the heathen world.

There would be little or no use for money, if Love governed the world.

And even now money is good for nothing, but it is a means of procuring among men of the world, the things needful to sustain life.

Neither ought we to desire it any farther, than it is needful for this end.

God to whom it belongs (as do all things) will require us to give a strict account of it.

His will is, that when we have used what is needful of it for ourselves, we should give all the rest to the poor, and for his glory.

Do not use yourselves therefore to lay it up, but give what you can spare to the poor.

Or else buy a little meat or cloaths for them, or some good books for their instruction.

And rejoice when you use your money thus: because this is for the glory of God.

L E S S O N VII.

Joy was made for God. Therefore we are taught in his word, to rejoice in the Lord always.

We should look upon God and his grace, as a great treasure : and thence we may learn how to rejoice in him.

When we possess a vast treasure, so that we cannot possibly lose it, then our joy is perfect.

Such will be the joy of the saints, in heaven, because then they cannot possibly lose this treasure any more.

But when we possess a vast treasure in such a manner, that we may lose it every moment, it is plain that our joy therein should be tempered with a serious fear.

And so it is with us. We may lose the grace of God, yea, every moment by divers ways.

We may lose it by our own wilful sins, by our negligence, or by our presumption.

To these we are tempted continually, by an infinite number of malicious and subtle enemies.

These

These surround us at all times, and in all places, and they never rest day or night.

Day and night the devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Therefore blessed is the man that feareth always.

And accordingly the same apostle, who teaches us to rejoice in the Lord always,

Teaches us at the same time, to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

And so St. Peter, speaking to those who rejoice in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory,

Advise them to remember him, who would judge them according to their works, and pass the time of their sojourning in fear.

L E S S O N VIII.

If we have lost this great treasure by our own fault, we have nothing in its place but poverty and misery.

But God has promised to give it us again, if we are thoroughly sensible of our loss:

If we repent, bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and truly believe in Jesus Christ.

So

So there is room for us, still to rejoice in hope : yet with a lively sense of our past sins, and present misery.

For to such alone is the promise made : thus saith the Lord, To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word.

And our Lord says, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

LESSON IX.

Even religious joy, if it be not thus mixed with fear, will soon be a mere nest of self-love.

It will cover the greatness of our corruption, and so hinder us from seeking to be cured of it.

It will make us carnally presume that we have the treasure of grace, while indeed we are far from it.

So the church of Laodicea said, I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing.

D

But

But Christ answered, Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

And it is to such that he says, Woe unto you that are rich ; for ye have received your consolation.

Woe unto you that are full ; for ye shall hunger.

Woe unto you that laugh now : for ye shall mourn and weep.

These are they to whom St. James says, Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep :

Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord ; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Therefore learn to serve the Lord in fear, and to rejoice in him with reverence.



S E C T I O N VI.

L E S S O N I.

How to regulate our Practice.

OUR body and our life belong to God. Therefore we ought to dispose of them according to his will, not according to our own.

Our own will naturally inclines to our own profit, our own honour, and our own pleasure. And thus it begets in us the deadly vice of covetousness, pride, and sensuality.

They hinder the workings of God in us, and the salvation of our souls.

Therefore we ought to accustom ourselves, with God's help, to deny ourselves in all things:

D 2

We

We should accustom ourselves to do all we do in a spirit of charity, and for the good of others :

In a spirit of humility, without any design or desire of being esteemed.

And in a spirit of penitence : without any regard to our own pleasure, either of body or mind.

In all things we should aim at being made conformable to our crucified Saviour.

This is the true spirit of the Christian life and practice. This is true Christianity.

But it is wholly opposite to the spirit of the world, and of corrupt nature.

By which, alas ! one suffers one's self to be so softly drawn into hell, and drop smiling into everlasting perdition.

L E S S O N II.

It is the will of God that we should do nothing but to please him.

It is his pleasure to be glorified by our salvation.

His glory should be our supreme, absolute, and universal end.

The

The glory of God is advanced in this life, when we give ourselves up to Jesus Christ.

Then his power works through us, many holy actions; for which he alone is to be honoured and praised.

Without me, saith our Lord, ye can do nothing. But he that abideth in me bringeth forth much fruit.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.

This is to be understood of all sorts of actions and things: for every thing we do is to be done to the glory of God.

And nothing can be done well but in the name, that is, in the strength, and through the blessing of Jesus Christ.

Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

L E S S O N III.

So for example, we eat and drink to the glory of God, and in the name of Jesus Christ, when we are enabled by him to do it,

on a right principle, and in a right manner,
so as to say to him from the heart,

Suffer me not O Lord, to eat and drink
like a brute beast, only by a brutal appetite.

Much less do thou suffer me to follow
herein the motions of my corrupt nature.

But grant me, through the spirit of thy
Son, to eat and drink so much as is needful
to support my life.

And let me spend that life wholly in blessing thee, and loving and obeying thee.

So likewise you speak to the glory of God,
and in the name of Jesus Christ, when by
his strength, you say no thing but what is guided by him, and directed according to his will:

When you speak nothing but what is needful, and proper to give men good thoughts and turn them from such as are wicked and vain.

And thus, in all things, let this be your single aim, That God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

L E S S O N IV.

What are the ten commandments of God?

1. Thou shalt have no other gods but me.
2. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down unto them, nor worship them : for I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the father upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain : for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
4. Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou

and thy son and thy daughter, thy man servant, and thy maid servant, thy cattle and the stranger which is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

5. Honour thy father, and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shalt do no murder.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

L E S S O N V.

Consider the law of God is a spiritual law. Therefore all these commandments are to be spiritually understood.

The

The first commandment means, Thou shalt not think, believe, or own any thing to be god but me.

Thou shalt not seek after witches or wizards, or practice any such abomination.

Thou shalt not put thy trust in any creature.

Thou shalt not love any thing but me, or for my sake.

God likewise herein commands thee to believe in him, and to acknowledge him in all thy ways.

He commands thee to thank him for all thou hast, and to make him thy only fear and dread :

To be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, and to trust in him with all thy heart :

To desire him alone ; to rejoice in him always, and to love him with all thy soul.

The second commandment teaches us, not to fancy that God is like the thoughts or imaginations of our dark reason :

It teaches us also, not to worship or bow to any image, or picture, but to glorify God both with our bodies and with our spirits.

L E S S O N VI.

If we will keep the third commandment,
We must never swear falsely; and if we
have sworn to do any thing, we must surely
do it.

We must never use the name of God at
all, but with reverence and godly fear.

We must not value ourselves upon his
name, his covenant, or the knowledge of
him in vain:

That is, without profiting thereby, without
bringing forth suitable fruits.

We must not cover over our own will or
passions, or designs, with the holy name of
God, of his truth, or his glory.

By the fourth commandment you are
taught to do no worldly business on the
Lord's-day.

But to spend it wholly in prayer, praise,
hearing or reading the word of God, and
other works of piety and charity.

The fifth commandment teaches you these
things,

Shew

Shew all lowliness and reverence to your father and mother, and do whatever either of them bids you.

If need be, relieve them, and never let them want any thing you can help them to.

Esteem the ministers who are over you in the Lord, very highly in love for their work's sake.

Obey them, and submit yourselves to them; for they watch over your souls.

Honour the king. Obey magistrates. Pray for kings, and all that are in authority.

If you have a master or mistress, be obedient to them in singleness of heart, as unto Christ.

L E S S O N VII.

The sixth commandment forbids not only the killing or hurting any one, but all anger, hatred, malice or revenge.

It forbids all provoking words, all strife and contention, all gluttony and drunkenness.

The seventh commandment forbids not only all outward uncleanness, but even the looking on a woman to lust after her.

It

It forbids also the using any thing merely to please ourselves. For this is a kind of spiritual fornication.

The eighth commandment forbids not only the taking from another what is his, either openly or secretly; but likewise the stealing from God (to whom they all belong) either our affections, or our time, or our goods, or our labour, by employing any of them any otherwise than for him.

The ninth commandment requires us to put away all lying, and to speak the truth from our heart.

It requires us to speak evil of no man, but to put away all backbiting and tale bearing.

It requires us also, to judge no man, that we be not judged; but to leave every one to God, the Judge of all.

The tenth commandment requires us to be content with what we have, and to desire nothing more.

L E S S O N VIII.

These are those laws of God, so wonderful and holy, of which David speaks so often with love and admiration.

These

These all the scriptures recommend as the spring of life, the light of the heart, the treasure of the soul: yea, our Lord calls them Life everlasting. John xii. 50.

These the Holy Spirit has promised to write in the hearts of those that truly believe in Jesus.

They may all be summed up in three.

1. To love God. 2. To love Jesus Christ himself, his cross and his tribulation, his reproach, the fellowship of his sufferings, and the being made conformable to his death.

3. To love our neighbour.

Our heart therefore should always be full of reverence for these. The love of them should be fixed in the marrow of our bones.

We should labour after this, by earnest prayer, by reading, and by meditating on those deep words,

The law of the Lord is an undefiled law: (the law of love) converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom to the simple.

The fear of the Lord is clean and endureth for ever, the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

More

More to be desired are they than gold ; yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb.

LESSON IX.

In a word : with regard to God, always live and act, as being in the presence of God.

Remember he is continually looking upon you.

And he will bring into judgment, all you have done, said or thought, whether it be good or evil.

For all which, you will be either rewarded or punished everlastingly.

Never fail to pray to God morning and evening, as well as before any work or business.

Desire his blessing and help, and afterwards give him thanks, and offer it up to God and his glory.

Hear the truths of God with attention and reverence, whether at home or at church.

But do not think you have served God, barely because you have heard them, or got them by heart.

Pray

Pray to God to give you a true understanding of them, and to enliven them by the working of the Spirit.

Pray him to give you an humble, submissive, simple, obedient heart.

As to your father and mother, and superiors;

Pray to God for them, love and reverence them, obey them without murmuring, even in those things which do not please you, unless they are plainly sins.

Do nothing without their knowledge, or without their leave.

L E S S O N X.

With regard to your neighbours, and your companions,

Pray to God for them also, wish them as well as you do yourself; and do to them, as you would have them do to you.

Think every one better than yourself; live in peace with them, help them; if they have done you wrong, forgive them, and pray heartily to God for them.

With regard to yourself,

Pray

Pray to God that you may always think meanly of yourself.

Eat nothing between meals.

At your meals eat moderately, of whatever is given you, whether you like it or not.¹

Desire nothing fine. Do not desire abundance of any thing. Be content with a little.

Employ your time as you are directed. Never be doing nothing. Idleness tempts the devil to tempt you.

Do not dispute, do not contradict any one, do not talk unless there be a necessity.

Do not seek to excuse yourself when you have done wrong, but be always ready to confess your fault both to God and man.

For God will not forgive your sin so long as you strive to excuse it.

L E S S O N X I.

If you do any thing well, thank God for it; and say,

I praise thee, O Lord, for giving me grace to do this. Without thee I can do nothing but evil.

And

And take care not to value yourself upon it. If you do, it destroys your soul.

When you do wrong without knowing it, perhaps it may be excused ; especially if you are glad to be taught better.

But whatever fault you commit wilfully, knowing it to be a fault, it cannot be excused.

So you must always be punished for lying, for calling names, for disobedience, or for striking any one ; for you know this is a sin against God ; and you must be punished for it, out of love to you, and for your own good.

You deserve punishment both in the sight of God and man.

If this fault was not punished now, it would grow upon you, and carry you to hell.

To prevent this, it is good to let you suffer a punishment now, a hundred thousand million of times less than that.

If you do this again, you must be punished again ; but pray to God, that you may do it no more.

That foolish love which would spare you now, would be indeed most cruel hatred.

LESSON XII.

Some may think the rules before laid down, to be either impossible or ridiculous.

They would not appear impossible to us, but because we have not been accustomed to them.

If we had, we should find by the grace of God, that nothing can be easier.

Neither can any think them ridiculous, unless it be to those to whom the cross of Christ is foolishness.

They are indeed ridiculous to the world, because the world is an enemy to God.

But the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, as the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world.

Be not conformable then to this present world. And love not the world nor the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

How unhappy therefore are they who bring up their children according to the rules of this world?

They

They who train them up, as it is called, to make their fortunes in the world !

That is indeed, to perish with the world, to be turned into hell, with all that forget God.

They will be reproached and cursed to all eternity, by those whom they thus trained up for the devil. Together with whom they will have their lot in everlasting burnings.

But happy are those who, despising the rules of the diabolical and anti-christian world,

Train up the precious souls of their children wholly by the rules of Jesus Christ.



PART the SECOND.

1. **T**HE first motions of turning to God, are usually like a spark of fire dropped on ice, with the winds blowing on all sides; which must therefore be quickly extinguished, unless God is pleased to keep it alive.

2. If you desire to give yourself up to God, be not discouraged at hinderances, temptations, oppositions: but consider, the grace of God in the soul grows by degrees, like a grain of mustard-seed in the earth.

3. It is not said, *Blessed is the man that hath not sinned*: but he to whom the Lord imputeth it not.

4. Read

4. Read a little at a time, and offer it to God on your knees. Thus David prayed seven times a day.

5. The grace we receive soon vanishes away, if it be not nourished and increased by holy exercises, which are the very first fruits, or rather the first blossoms of conversion.

6. Retirement from the world, joined with prayer and proper employ, are means of mortifying our senses, without which prayer profits little.

7. The best helps to mortification are the ill usage, the affronts, and the losses which befall us. We should receive them with all humility, as preferable to all others, were it only on this account, That our will has no part therein, as it has in those which we choose for ourselves.

8. Wo to them that seek comments to obscure the Bible, and to widen the narrow way of salvation ! For none can change the word of our Lord, *I have given you an example, that ye may do as I have done* : Neither that word, *What I say unto you, I say unto all*.

9. When we would give ourselves to God, we should not be eager at the beginning, to

hear long discourses on the sublime truths of christianity ; since it is not then the time for deep knowledge, but for good-works and sufferings. Those who are just turning to God, may even receive prejudice from such an employment of their yet feeble minds. It suffices for them now, to know what they ought to do, and instead of multiplying knowledge, to multiply good-works.

10. We should bear not only with patience but with joy, loss of goods, pleasures, and the evils of earth, seeing Christ has taught us by his example, that there is no other way of attaining the glory of heaven.

11. The souls of men are things so great and precious, that having need, according to the divine wisdom of an invisible guardian, and a visible guide, they can neither have an angel to guard, nor a man to guide them, but those whom God himself gives, by a peculiar appointment.

12. The language of love and grace is upon earth, the beginning of the language of heaven.

13. Those who feel that they are always upon the verge of death, and who have eternity

nity in their heart, will not find any thing very alluring or agreeable in the world. And he to whom God is all, looks on every thing upon earth as nothing.

14. True virtue consists in a thorough conformity to the whole will of God : who wills and does all (excepting sin) which comes to pass in the world. And in order to be truly holy, we have only to embrace all events, good and bad, as his will.

15. Except the sight of glory, and the participation of grace (the light of God) all is darkness in this world and in the other. We need not therefore so much lament over those, who want their bodily sight, as over them who being quicksighted in this life, will in the other be blind for ever.

16. God is not honoured as God, in a manner worthy of Him, but by the voluntary oblation which we make him of our life. His Son made an oblation of his own to God ; which obliges us if we are real Christians, to give him our life, and that of those who are so dear to us, that they are as our second soul.

17. In the greatest afflictions which can befall the just, either from heaven or earth, they remain immoveable in virtue, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward loving regard to Him, uniting all the powers of their soul.

18. Such is the condescension of God, that he requires us to love him even more than we fear him. Many fear without loving him; but no one loves without fearing him, and being ready to die rather than offend him. Among persons of every age, and every profession, there are but few of this disposition: but what of piety appears in them, resembles the blossoms which we see in spring, that adorn the trees for a-while, but soon disappear, and leave no fruit behind them.

19. Whether we think, or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love and the desire of pleasing him.

20. That silence of spirit which cuts off all those thoughts and words, that might spring from the affliction we feel, on the loss of them who are most near and dear to us, is the best submission we can pay, to that empire over the
living

living and the dead, which God has reserved to himself. And the best devotion we can practice on these occasions, is, as far as possible to efface from our minds, those images which disquiet and afflict us, that God alone may fill our heart, and remain for ever the object and the master of our passions and of our thoughts.

21. We ought to consider, at the death of those whom we love the most, and even of them from whom we receive life, that all the names of tenderness and respect, which proceed from flesh and blood are lost at the moment of their separation from us, to return to God as their principle : to the end that the stream running no more, we may have recourse to the fountain ; that ceasing to see them, we may seek to Him, of whom they were only the image ; and that so we may now have no other Father than Him, which is in heaven, of whom we are incessantly to ask the bread of life, and eternal inheritance.

22. The most magnificent houses and palaces are only trophies of human vanity, which in a little time will perish in flames with the world. Let us provide an habitation, in the
eternal

eternal palace of paradise, by now purifying ourselves in the flames of divine love.

23. In the world, the fathers must die, before their children can enter upon their inheritance. But in the church, the children must die, to enter into the inheritance of their heavenly Father.

24. If the death of them we love, does not make us enter into ourselves, correct that which displeases God, and ask of him light to discover the delusions of the world and the devil: we have reason to fear that nothing will, but that we shall live and die without wisdom.

25. Grace from within and affliction from without, destroy the sins of those souls, who cast themselves into the arms of God, and sincerely desire to be given up to him.

26. The language of love, even when it speaks the most strongly, ought to be decent and courteous, there being no courtesy, like that which we learn from the holy scripture.

27. We need not affect elaborate reasonings in matters of grace, because the principle of this is faith, which does not reason at all,
but

but goes simply where God points out the way.

28. The way to find nothing grievous in this world, is to have eternity always in our thoughts. For then all of grand and magnificent which we see here, appears a mere shadow, a nothing. How natural a reflection is this, when great men die in the prime of life ! What can shew in a stronger light the vanity of all, which men admire so much and leave so soon !

29. We ought to honour those holy ones which God honours, and to expect more assistance from them than from others, at the time when he manifests their holiness ; because they are then as it were new fountains, which God causes to appear in his church, and who will soon (as other saints have done) retire into God their source, after they shall have watered a few more of his children.

30. God hates nothing so much as the forgetting the favours which he does to them whom he deigns to name his friends.

31. The whole life of a christian consists in following God ; who manifests his will
more

more and more, according to our faithfulness to him.

32. When one is willing simply to follow the truth, there is no trouble in deciding the greatest difficulties.

33. God himself instructs those who follow him with simplicity, and shines in their hearts when they regard none but him. To arrive at this happy state, we must desire only that which God gives us from his own hand, and beg him with fervent prayer, to keep us always in the desire of him alone and of his grace.

34. It is scarce conceivable, how strait the way is, wherein God leads them that serve him, and how dependent upon him we must be, unless we will be wanting in our faithfulness to him.

35. It is God's part to prevent us, and ours to adore and serve him in perfect subjection to his will.

36. Few persons go to God with that fulness of heart, which makes them walk with vigour, in the narrow way to heaven.

37. As a single soul surpasses in excellence all bodies how beautiful so ever they are ; so a single

single spiritual sin often surpasses in guilt a multitude of bodily sins. And spiritual sins are the most dangerous, in that bodily sins usually come to a period by age, by change of fortune, by the removal of the occasions, by the disgust that accompany, or the evil that follow them : but it is quite otherwise with spiritual : nothing being so fruitful as the sins of the spirit.

38. There is nothing so bitter that love does not sweeten. And if one sees that the covetous, the ambitious, the voluptuous, turn their greatest labours into their greatest pleasures, is it strange that the love of God, and the sorrow for having offended him, are capable of sweetning whatever he has ordained for the healing of our souls.

39. God gives his children a kind of spiritual air to breathe, namely, the influence of his spirit. And this never fails them that love him, how weak so ever they are.

40. The grand truths of repentance, and the present kingdom of heaven, are unveiled under the new law. The gospel always join them together ; and it is impossible to put them asunder.

41. As

41. As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin, which is upon the heart, will hinder its right motion toward God.

42. It is scarce credible, of how great consequence before God the smallest things are, and what great inconveniencies sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

43. We ought to be in the church, as the saints are in heaven ; and in the house as the holiest men are in the church ; doing our work in the house as they pray in the church, worshipping God from the ground of the heart.

44. There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without lowliness and sweetness of spirit. It is by this alone, that we are able to pass the days of winter, as those of summer ; that is, the afflictions we meet with from time to time, as well as the joys and consolations.

45. God loves nothing so much as gratitude and thanksgiving. And, as this is the first act of our piety, it ought to be the most constant,

constant, and to begin and conclude all our prayers.

46. To continue in grace, we must pray without ceasing, since we cannot continue, unless we grow therein. Hence it is, that many of those who receive it, lose it immediately : because their commerce with the world, does not permit them to pray often ; or if they do, it is with a thousand distractions, which dishonour the majesty of God, whom we should hardly approach, but with the lowest prostration both of body and soul. He dispenses indeed with that of the body, because our weakness does not permit us to be always in that posture : but our inmost soul should be always bowed down before him in the lowest humiliation.

47. The evils of the body cure themselves in time, but not those of the spirit ; because they partake of its nature, which is immortal. And for this cure we can rely on none but God ; who is the only physician of souls, as it is he alone who creates them.

48. The bearing men, and suffering evil in peace and silence, is the sum of the whole christian life. Without this a man is a captive

tive though at liberty, and with this he is free though a captive.

49. A true christian is not a common thing. And he who is such, is unspeakably happy.

50. To be habitually prepared for the Lord's table, we must walk in the narrow way, at a distance from the world, nourish our souls with the truths of God laid down in the gospels, and in the epistles, which are a kind of commentaries, upon them: meditate on them in the secret of our heart, and grow in love as well as in knowledge.

51. Truths resemble money, all the value whereof depends upon the proper use of it.

52. Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love.

53. Instead of reading much, to satisfy our curiosity, we ought to content ourselves with reading a little, in order to make a full use thereof, and turn it as it were, into our substance. Otherwise by filling our heads with knowledge, we drive the grace of God from our hearts.

54. Both at the beginning and end, and
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even in the midst of our reading, we should lift up our hearts to God, whether with words or without, that he would please to convert what we read into spiritual food, such as by means of his truth may nourish and strengthen us more and more in his love.

55. The truths of religion are like essences, of which we give the sick a little at a time, because being full of spirits, all parts of the body are affected by the little that is taken. This occasioned our blessed Lord to say, *My words are spirit and life.* And accordingly one of his divine truths, suffice a man to nourish his soul for a whole day.

56. One may say of the knowledge of sublime truths, what the apostle says of the goods of this world, that they may not hurt a christian, he ought to possess them, as if he possess them not : that is, without any attachment to them, without any reliance upon them.

57. Nothing is so capable of destroying the grace of God, even in retirement, as idleness.

58. Agree with the poor quickly while thou art in the way with them. Make them

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friends

- friends by the mammon of unrighteousness. For they will be as princes in paradise, where they will receive the rich into the everlasting habitation.

59. The whole christian religion is only love, pure and fervent as the fire at Pentecost.

60. Instead of busying our mind with dwelling on the grievous part of what is past and to come, we should remember, that the gospel does not permit us to dwell on any thing, but the presence and love of God, who fills our soul, provided we do not disquiet ourselves with vain thoughts. But we cannot, either in earth or heaven, inhabit any other than a peaceful heart.

61. Sweetness joined with strength are the two marks of the Spirit of God.

62. As God is well pleased, that they who love him should form designs for his glory, we ought to labour therein with all our power; and yet not to be any way discomposed, when he breaks in pieces our best designs, so our heart is still fixed to be his entirely, and to live to his glory.

63. The whole of christian religion is love.
This

This alone destroys the desire of the goods, and the fear of the evils of this world. We should labour to increase it, without desiring and without fearing any thing.

64. The love of God has its sorrows and tears, as well as its joys and consolations.

65. As love, which is the soul of our soul and life of our life, is at first only a single spark, we should take care that nothing remain in our soul, that hinders its growth and enlargement.

66. God is the first object of our love: its next office is, to bear the defects of others. For as he is invisible to us, it is his will, that we see and love him in our neighbour. And we should begin the practice of this love, amidst our own household.

67. The littleness of things does not hinder their being greatly pleasing to God, when we do them with all our heart: as on the contrary, great things done lazily, are little in his sight: because in all our works, he regards the spirit abundantly more than the matter.

68. Let none imagine he is virtuous be-

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cause

cause he talks of virtue with pleasure. Virtue without practice is a mere illusion.

69. Those who seek God, find him, in practising the exercises which he has prescribed in the gospel. The sum of them is, love, obey, be humble, suffer his will.

70. God is so great, that we know not how to pray to him, but by his own Spirit, and the movement which he gives us.

71. Great virtue consists, in trying to vary and multiply the marks of our gratitude for all the mercies of God.

72. One observes, that whereas there is but one devil who persecutes the innocent, there are seven that persecute the penitent.

73. Christ charges himself with our temporal affairs, provided we charge ourselves with those that regard his glory.

74. The smallest things of religion are great, because the Spirit of God is in them.

75. The main of Christianity consists, in not following our own spirit, and being given up to God by renouncing ourselves. Accordingly, there is nothing more profitable for

for a Christian than sickness; which joins obedience with faith.

76. Our one desire should be, to have no other desire in this world but to be faithful to God.

77. Humility alone unites patience with love, without which, it is impossible to draw profit from suffering, or indeed to avoid being discontented at being afflicted: especially when we think that we have given no occasion for the evil which men make us suffer. If we then fall into impatience, it is for want of humility, whatever love we may appear to have.

78. Perfect humility is a kind of self-annihilation: and this is the centre of all virtues.

79. When we let the time of affliction pass, without profiting by it, we commit three faults: that is, to despise God; to forget ourselves; and to overlook the great lesson which religion teaches, viz. What we are in this world, and what we shall be in the other.

80. The first thing we ought to do when great affliction befalls us is, to examine the state

of our souls ; and if we find ourselves culpable in any thing, whatever it costs, to make our peace with God.

81. There is none who comforts Christians but the Spirit of God : the word itself, separate from him is useless. He is therefore peculiarly styled, the Comforter ; because he is come down on the earth, on purpose to heal our sorrows and cares by shedding his love abroad in our hearts.

82. The readiest way to escape from our sufferings is, To be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

83. They who have known most of the ineffable greatness of God have had the deepest reverence for it. The sense of this ought to make us work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and distrust ourselves in our best undertakings, particularly in those which regard the service of the church ; because they require the highest purity of heart ; in all that are employed therein.

84. As painters chuse and prepare the ground, which they design for their choicest works, so God prepares the ground of those souls, by whom he intends to do great things ;
thus

thus he prepared St. Paul, even from his mother's womb.

85. We ought earnestly to pray to God, before we undertake any thing, though we feel such love in our heart, that there are no poor whom we would not relieve, no sick whom we would not heal, and none afflicted whom we would not succour, even at the expence of our life. For experience shews, that in order to do good, it is not enough to have a loving heart: and that God sometimes gives these desires, and yet does not bring them to effect.

86. Our own household gives us too great occasion to know, the greatness and depths of our inward wounds, by the falls into which we are so often betrayed, by their, perhaps involuntary defects. How ought we to watch over ourselves, in order to resist these temptations, which, (how little soever the occasions be) are great, because they are continual!

87. The bare sight of men in the world, impresses I know not what of evils on the hearts of good men: there is a kind of contagious air hid in the spirit of the ungodly,
which

which communicates itself to the soul more insensibly, than the infection of the plague communicates itself to the body. In order therefore to solid Christian holiness, we must keep at a distance from these men.

88. The world is an enemy to truly good works, particularly the great change which God works in the soul.

89. Flattery is a poison which is the more dangerous, the more sweet and insensible it is. Those therefore who are just setting out in religion, should carefully shut their ears to praise, even to that which the best of men sometimes give, without thinking of the mischief it may do.

90. Virtue is like a crystal, on which the least word of praise imprints a blot, which must be effaced.

91. We should be continually labouring to cut off all the useless things that surround us. And God usually retrenches the superfluities of our soul, in the same proportion as we do those of our bodies.

92. As the devil will not be shut up in the abyss till the judgment of the great day, he makes, meantime, an abyss of the souls of
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of wicked men, into which he plunges himself with whole legions.

93. As man has nothing excellent but love, he gives God nothing, unless he gives him this. Even as all the rest of God's gifts would be useless to man, did he not give him his love also.

94. The devil is so hideous, that he could not deceive us, nor make himself beloved by us, did he not cover himself with the beauty, and the sweet and agreeable appearances of the creatures.

95. The best means of resisting the devil, is, to destroy whatever of the world remains in us in order to raise for God, upon its ruins, a building all of love. Then shall we begin in this fleeting life, to love God, as we shall love him in eternity.

96. The love of God and the love of the world cannot subsist together in one heart. It must needs be, that one of them will conquer and destroy the other.

97. *St. Augustin* says, There is danger, lest after sin is killed, it comes to life again, if it be not buried.

98. If we would be superior to the goods
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and evils of this world, the things that are seen ought to be to us as if they were not seen ; and, on the other hand, the things that are not seen, as if they were always before our eyes.

99. Nothing shews the real state of our soul, like persecution and affliction. And if we suffer them with that humility and firmness, which only the grace of God can work in us, we attain a larger measure of conformity to Christ by a due improvement of one of these occasions, than we could have done by imitating his mercy, in abundance of good works.

100. The scripture speaks of the earth as a wilderness, an hospital, a prison, an image of hell. Therefore woe unto them that are attached to it ; who do not labour to die to all below, and to aspire after nothing but heaven, where alone is true life, and all that deserves the name of good or pleasure.

101. How real soever the things of earth appear, they are no other than veils that deceive us. The hills therefore hide eternal
goods

goods from us, and the goods hide from us eternal evils.

102. The true marks of love are, an hunger and thirst after the word and the life of Christ.

103. God often deals more rigorously with those whom he loves than with others. And his will is, that the afflictions which he sends them, should serve to disengage them, from whatever attached them to the world, that they may be more free to cleave to him.

104. We scarce conceive, how easy it is to rob God of his due, in our friendship with the most virtuous persons, until they are torn from us by death. But if this loss produce lasting sorrow, it is a clear proof, that we had two treasures, between which we had divided our heart.

105. The devil is enraged only at those who fight against him, and his rage increases, when he sees the increase of grace in them. But he cannot conquer us, if we continue to fight, and to have a steady dependance on God, who fights for and in his children, and can never be conquered.

106. We

106. We are to labour as if we had no dependance on the grace of God: and to trust as entirely in his grace, as if we did not labour at all. The one preserves us from negligence, the other from presumption.

107. There are some peculiar occasions that rarely occur, which we ought to manage with the utmost care; because one of these is of far more value before God, than many ordinary ones.

108. Even the weakness which remains in us is, by the testimony of God, one of the most powerful means, of making us more strong than ever, more immoveable in his service.

109. If we were not weak, and impotent, our good works would be to us our own property: just as the corn he produces out of the earth belongs to the husbandman. Whereas now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from him and his grace, which triumphs over our weakness, when raising our works and making them all divine, he honours himself in us through them.

110. When men have sown the seed in the ground, they cease awhile from their labour.

But

But when Jesus Christ has sown his grace in our hearts, we should beseech him to labour with us still, and to perfect that which he has begun ; otherwise there will be no fruit. For the devil omits nothing which may hinder the good seed from growing up, and bringing forth fruit to perfection.

111. If we do not testify to God, by a continual care for our salvation, that we esteem his grace above all things, the least consent to an evil thing, makes it retire by little and little into the bosom of Christ, from whence it came. Yet he is so gracious, that after we are truly humbled, he gives us new grace.

112. God, in order to cure some souls of those sins which are the greatest of all in his sight, suffers them to fall into others, which are greater in the sight of men.

113. Christian friendship is the refinement of that love which we bear to a fellow-christian, to whom God unites by an affection which cannot be well known but by those who truly love God.

114. The holy Spirit, having made of all Christians one soul, they ought to have the same joys and sorrows. But if he pleases
(of

(of which also we have examples in scripture) to make two or more Christians of one heart and one soul, there ought to be an increase of joy in their holy affections, as much greater as their friendship is more perfect than that of other Christians.

115. One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And since he is invisible to our eyes, we ought to serve him in our neighbour, which he receives as done to himself in person, standing visibly before us.

116. The way to advance more and more in love, is to practise it to the uttermost.

117 The chief worship we owe to God, is to love him with all our heart without sharing it between him and the creatures. They ought to serve us only for steps, to lift us up toward him.

118. Love has this in common with sacrifice, that it ought to be offered to God alone.

119. To preserve the life of the soul, prayer ought to be joined with the other ordinances, as it is the channel which reaches to heaven, and brings down into the soul that breath of God, without which it cannot live.

120. Charity cannot be practised right, unless,

less, first, We exercise it from the moment God gives the occasion ; and secondly retire the instant after, and offer it to God by humble thanksgiving. And this for three reasons ; the first, To render to him what we have received from him ; the second, To avoid the dangerous temptation which springs from the very goodness of these works ; and the third, To unite ourselves to God, in whom the soul expands itself in prayer, with all the graces we have received, and the good works which we have done, to draw from him new strength against the bad effects which these very works may produce in us, if we do not make use of the antidotes which God has ordained against these poisons. The true means, to be filled anew with the riches of grace, is thus to strip ourselves of it : and without this it is extremely difficult not to grow faint in the practice of good works.

121. We ought to know, that we have no part in the good which we do ; and that accordingly, as God hides himself in doing it by us, we ought also, as far as is possible, to hide it from ourselves, and in a manner to annihilate ourselves before him saying, “ Lord we are nothing

thing before thee ; but thou art all to us.
 We continue to be as nothing, after thou hast
 by thy double mercy, drawn us out of nothing
 and out of sin : the proof whereof we incess-
 antly bear in ourselves, in our continual
 weakness and helplessness. We see ourselves
 in the midst of an ocean : for thou art the true
 and boundless ocean of nature and of grace,
 which neither ebbs nor flows, but is per-
 manent and immoveable. Thou spreadest
 abroad as it pleaseth thee, the celestial waters
 in all ages, and drawest them back and sendest
 them again into the souls thou lovest, by
 fluxes and refluxes, ineffable and divine.
 Thy Spirit is the only wind that blows, and
 that reigns over the infinite ocean. And as
 we see the waters on the earth, which cease
 to run, though but for a little while, are
 immediately corrupted, we have reason to
 fear, lest the same thing befall our souls,
 if instead of causing these heavenly waters
 to return to thee their source, we retain,
 and stop them in their motion, though it were
 but for a moment. For whereas the rivers of
 earth corrupt themselves when they stop, but
 without corrupting the channel through which
 they flow ; the rivers of thy grace, stopt, are
 never

never themselves corrupted, but the souls, thro' which they pass. We find therefore, O God it is more difficult to restore to thee, by humble thankfulness, the graces we have received from thee, than to attract them into our souls by prayer; and that accordingly these reflexes toward the fountain, are greater favours than the effluxes therefrom. Wherefore the only grace which we implore from thee, and which comprehends all others, is, That the grace may never descend to us, but to re-ascend that it may never re-ascend, but to descend into us again: so that we may be eternally watered by thee, and thou eternally glorified.

122. Good works do not receive their last perfection, till they as it were lose themselves in God. This is a kind of death to them, resembling that of our bodies, which will not attain the highest life, their immortality, till they lose themselves in the glory of our souls, or rather of God, wherewith they will be filled. And it is only what they had of earthly and mortal, which good works lose by this spiritual death.

123. Fire is the symbol of love: and the love of God is the principle and end of our good works. But as truth surpasses figure, the fire of divine love has this advantage over material fire, that it can re-ascend to its source, and

rise thither with all the good works which it produces. And by this means it prevents their being corrupted by pride, vanity, or any evil mixture. But this cannot be done otherwise than by making these good works, in a spiritual manner die in God, by deep gratitude, which plunges the soul in him as in an abyfs, with all that it is, and all the grace and works for which it is indebted to him : a gratitude, whereby the soul seems to empty itself of them, that they may return to their source, as rivers seem willing to empty themselves, when they pour themselves with all their waters into the sea.

124. The natural admiration of man flows from ignorance : but that of a Christian from knowledge.

125. When we have received any favour from God, we ought to retire, (if not into our closet, into our heart) and say, " I come, Lord, to restore to thee what thou hast given, and I freely relinquish it, to enter again into my own nothingness. For what is the most perfect creature in heaven or earth in thy presence, but a void capable of being filled with thee, as the air which is void and dark is capable
of

of being filled with the light of the sun? Grant, therefore, O God, that I may never appropriate thy grace to myself, any more than the air appropriates to itself the light of the sun; who with draws it every day to restore it the next, there being nothing in the air that either appropriates its light or resists it. O give me the same facility of receiving and restoring thy grace and good works: I say thine; for I acknowledge the root from which they spring, is in thee, and not in me."

126. As all that we can properly call our own, is the evil which is natural to us, they who are truly touched by the Spirit of God, have no right to complain of any reproach, whether they are guilty of the thing or not. It suffices, that they have in them the principle of all the faults which are, or can be laid to their charge.

127. There is no true charity which is not accompanied with humility, courage and patience.

128. We should chiefly exercise our love toward those who most check either our way of thinking: or our temper, or our knowledge, or the desire we have, that others

should be as virtuous as we would wish to be ourselves.

129. As God once subsisted without any creature in his own infinite fulness, so love will subsist in itself, without any outward works: which are now only the streams, whereof love is the source the shoots of which this is the root, the rays whereof love is the sun, the spark of which this is the fire, always acting, always consuming, and yet preserving the soul wherein it dwells.

130. The desire of exercising charity, obliges us to purify ourselves by all sorts of holy exercises. that we may be filled with the gifts of God, and capable of imparting them to others, without losing any thing of our own fulness. By thus exercising our charity, we increase it. This alone, when it fills the heart, has the advantage of giving always, and by giving enriching itself.

131. One of the greatest evidences of the love of God to the souls he hath touched with his love, is to send them afflictions, with grace to bear them.

132. There is no affliction which befalls the righteous, of which God is not the author.

And

And whereas the ills of other men, have no mixture of good, God mingles with the sufferings of the righteous, those seeds, which although bitter at first, yet afterward bring forth peaceable fruit.

133. Ever in great sicknesses or afflictions we ought to testify to God, that in receiving them as from his hand, we feel pleasure in the midst of the pain, from being afflicted by him who loves us, and whom we love.

134. If we are persuaded, that God does not afflict us, but to make us still more capable of loving him by purifying our hearts through that fire which he came to bring into the world, we should take pleasure in suffering our afflictions, and consuming, by that divine fire of the earth which makes us love too well, our bodies, our health, our own will, and the things of the world.

135. There would be danger in ever mentioning to any person, any good work which he had done, if he was not humble, and his heart abased before God, by a deep sense of his favours.

136. God usually mingles pains with the signal graces which he gives, or will give to them he loves. And his thus casting them

down is the ordinary token, that he is about to raise them up.

137. Happy are they who are sick, or lose their life, for having done a good work.

138. The souls of the just re-enter into God by death, as the vital blood re-enters the heart.

139. Most of those who die well in the judgment of men, die ill in the judgment of God.

140. The weightiness of our words and actions is an effect of simplicity joined with prudence.

141. Nothing gives us so great confidence in speaking, as speaking from the fulness of our heart. And when it is filled with love, this confidence is so great, that we can hardly refrain from speaking.

142. He who loves none but God, thinks of him always, and that which is not God, cannot please him:

143. "If I grieve, O Lord, it is because loving thee as I do, I do not see thee."

144. God is so great, that he communicates his greatness to the least things which are done for his service.

145. To

145. To live as a Christian, one must act only by the Spirit of God : otherwise we live as heathens

146. God hardly gives his Spirit even to those whom he has already established in grace; if they do not ask it of him on all occasions, not only once, but many times.

147. The first fruit of faith is prayer; the lifting up the soul to God to implore his assistance even in the smallest things, which it would undertake for his service.

148. Faith teaches us two things at the same time : one, that we ought to do nothing but for God : the other that he must engage us in those good works which we would carry on and finish well.

149. As far as we advance in obedience, so far we advance in faith. And so far as we advance in faith, we advance in love, which is the heart, the life, the soul of faith.

150. We should do nothing without asking consent of God : and we should take care not to prevent his answer, by those almost insensible desires, which lie hid in the foldings of our heart.

151. All is clear to us, in proportion as we
G 4 walk

walk in the bright path of faith, obedience, prayer, love, and Christian fidelity.

152. God teaches the souls he loves and that love him, in a far more excellent manner than men can do. For whereas they speak only to the ear, he speaks to the heart. They only propose what ought to be done: he gives power to execute, light and heat at once.

153. When a Christian is sick, his bed is his church.

154. We should be prepared by purity of heart, to speak of God, lest we should wound his truths. We are to give a strict account of our least idle words; and shall we not give a strict account of his!

155. Great men have herein more of the image of God than others, that they have more means of doing good. And one may say, that they are born for that end, To do good in the world.

156. God never hears our prayers without increasing our love to him and our neighbour.

157. All that a Christian does, even his eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done with simplicity, according to the order of
God,

God, without either adding to, or diminishing from it, by his own choice.

158. Love is the only virtue which has no bounds.

159. The three greatest punishments which God can inflict on sinners in this world, are, 1. To let loose their own desires upon them :

2. To let them succeed in all they wish for, and 3. To suffer them to continue many years in the quiet of their enjoyment thereof.

160. The heathen philosophers well knew that man is the world in miniature. But they did not know, that every single man is a world of corruption. And that all the impurity which is in the creation, flows from the impurity contained in our souls.

161. If the greatest philosophers can hardly account for the conflicts that rise in the air, how can they account for those that arise in our souls, the depth of which surpasses that of the sea ? This ignorance is one of the greatest exercises of our patience ; and of the most useful, if we suffer, but not consent to it.

162. God considers our outward good works, only according to the good dispositions of our hearts. And as this is sometimes like
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the trees in winter, full of warm within, though producing nothing without, he loves this barrenness, caused only by outward hindrances, more than men do flowers and fruits.

163. True friendship obliges us to have no less regard to the desires of our friends than to their needs.

164. Happy the soul in which love never sleeps, and to which it serves for a perpetual spur.

165. It is observed, that the actions which proceed from love, are done without difficulty. How much more if they proceed from the love of God, since it is himself who does them in us?

166. God, in creating visible things, only gave us a picture of things invisible.

167. There are three ways to edify our neighbour: The first, To treat well, at least in words, all evil men, particularly those who seek to do us evil: The second, To judge no man, though appearances are against him; and even when the fault is proved, as far as we can, either to excuse, or cover it by a modest silence: And the third, Unless there
be

be a plain necessity not to speak of ourselves; good or bad.

168. Love shews courtesy to young and old, good and bad, wise and unwise: indeed to all the world. But it uses no flattery either to others or ourselves.

169. Love feasts when it can, and as much as it can. It leads to all the ordinances of God; and employs itself in all the outward works whereof it is capable. It flies as it were, like *Elijah*, over the plain, to find God upon his holy mountain.

170. We ought to suffer with patience whatever befalls us; to bear the defects of others, and our own; to own them to God in secret prayer, or with groans which cannot be uttered: but never speak a sharp or peevish word, nor to murmur or repine.

171. If to avoid occasions of sin, and to strengthen our weakness, we would now and then retire from the world, it is incredible, what help we should receive from God, and what increase in the fruits of his Spirit.

172. The sea is an excellent figure of the fulness of God, and that of the blessed spirits. For as the rivers all return into the sea, so
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the bodies, the souls, and the good works of the righteous, return into God, to live there in his eternal repose.

173. What the scripture terms *the finger of God*, is no other than the Holy Spirit, who engraves in our hearts what pleaseth him.

174. Nothing is more opposite to salvation than the love of riches; for in the same proportion as these increase, all experience shews, the love of pleasure, and the desire of honour increases also.

175. One that is truly *poor in spirit* loves poverty, as much as other men love riches.

176. At first the Christians were wholly distinct from the world. But as they are now mingled with it, and of the same spirit, those who seriously desire salvation, ought so far as they can, to separate themselves from all that have the spirit of the world.

177. It is full as glorious to die for charity as for truth; nor will it have a less recompense of God.

178. Death entered by the ear into the soul of our first mother: by the eye chiefly it enters the souls of her children. But
whereas

whereas *Eve*, after having hearkened to the serpent took the forbidden fruit, her children generally, after having seen it, hearken to the counsels of the devil. And indeed, if the few words of that unhappy spirit ruined *Eve*, even in a state of innocence, what can we expect, if in our state of sin and impotence, we pass our life in perpetual converse with the world, and in the continual sight of creatures under which the devil conceals himself far better than under the form of a serpent?

179. To conceive still better the danger we are in, while we remain in the corruption of the world, consider on the one hand, *Eve*, with her strength and innocence, in the paradise of God: on the other, men weak and sinful, the creatures all affectious, all instruments of sin, and that are as a veil with which the devil covers himself, to tempt us the more ineffectually; and lastly, the world, which is the place of banishment with regard to our bodies, a prison with regard to our souls, and a hell with regard to those evil spirits, who remain there, continually mingled

led with men, till the judgment of the great day.

180. The world which we are to hate, is not this heaven and this earth which we behold, but the infection which sin has spread through them and all the creatures which they contain. So that whereas at their creation they were the objects that excited man's praise, admiration and devotion toward God, they are now the objects of his concupiscence and irregular desires.

181. The great, will, after their death, look upon the pomp and pleasures wherein they had lived, just as those who awake from a deep sleep do on the riches, honours, and pleasures, which they saw in their dream.

182. There is no other way to find God, than to despise all things else, to love him alone in the unity of his being, the trinity of persons, and the incarnation of his Son.

183. Although all that is created lives in and by God, as the birds live in and by the air, nevertheless this universal system of beings has not yet acquired its last perfection. It bears, deeply engraven in all its parts, the
marks

marks of *Adam's* disobedience ; which render it altogether unworthy of our desires and affections.

184. God has not given man a heart so vast and so capable of loving, but in order to fill it with his love, and with himself alone. Accordingly we ought to use the creatures as so many steps to raise us up to the Author of our being, that we may render him not only for ourselves, but for them also, a perpetual homage, by acknowledging all the wonders and benefits for which they are indebted to him.

185. As on many occasions some of the senses correct the others, and reason corrects them all ; so faith which is in Christians a superior reason, ought to correct the judgment which purely human reason forms of the goods and evils of this world.

186. If the whole earth is no more than a point compared with the heaven that surrounds it, what is it when compared to the superior sphere which surrounds all the lower heavens ? What is the littleness then of any or all of the things which the earth contains ?

187. All that is good here below flows
from

from above. And if but one drop could fall into our heart of the happiness of heaven, pure as it is in its source, earth would become a paradise. Nor would there be then need to put off the body; because the least part of those heavenly goods, received in its fulness, would render us blessed and immortal, even in this world.

188. Although all the grace of God, depend on his mere bounty, yet is he pleased generally to attach them to the prayers, and good instructions, the good examples and the holiness of those among whom we are brought up. And if we knew the secret of the grace of Christ, and the strong, though invisible attractions whereby he draws some souls through their intercourse with others, we should beware to whom we entrusted the education of our children.

189. When the world displays all its grandeur and goods before us, we should say to it, as our Lord to Satan, when he shewed him all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them, *Get thee behind me, world, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

190. There

190. There is nothing in the world that is not in a continual flux, and with so rapid a motion, that one cannot possess it, but part by part, and from moment to moment.

191. To prepare the mind for prayer it ought to be at liberty, in tranquillity, in humility, in confidence, in simplicity, and in an entire dependence on God: not troubled, not divided, not wavering, neither preventing the will of God by any secret passion.

192. Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

193. We should not be impatient to receive of God, but to give him our heart, the only thing he requires.

194. Those words of St. Paul, *No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*, shew us the necessity of eyeing God in our good works, in our prayers, and even in our minutest thoughts, knowing that none are pleasing to him but those which he forms in us and with us. From hence we learn, that we cannot speak to him or serve him, unless he uses our tongue, hands, and heart, to do
H by

by himself, and by his Spirit, whatever he would have us do.

195. All devotion depends on that new heart, which God gives us when it pleases him. In order to receive, the soul should be disengaged from all that shuts up the door of our heart against the Spirit. We are continually as asleep, unless he awakens us.

196. By retirement and abstractedness from the world, we should remove all hindrances to those secret conversations, those visits, unknown to men of the world, and those divine impressions, which make us groan and sigh, love and desire, pray and importune God, to give us the continual influence of his Spirit, without which the soul remains dry, and barren, as trees are in winter, though there may be life in their root.

197. Whenever God ceases to inspire us with his holy Spirit, we lie open to the corruption of our own spirit, and the malice of the wicked one. And this he frequently does, if we discontinue our watching, or are not instant in prayer.

198. God's command, To pray without
3 ceasing,

ceasing, is founded on the necessity we have of his grace, to preserve the life of God in our soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can subsist without continual supplies of air.

199. If even those who have known the grace of God, do not continually watch unto prayer, the evil root of sin will have more influence on them than the good seed of grace.

200. God in his excellent wisdom raises in us good thoughts, and then inspires us with prayer, to ask of him those graces, which he is resolved to give, when we ask with a full submission to his will. Therefore in order to know, if we shall obtain what we ask, we have only to consider, Do we seek our own pleasure, or merely the grace of God in our prayers? If this only, we shall have the petitions we ask of him.

201. As the most dangerous winds may enter at little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously into the souls of good men, than by little amusements, and little unobserved incidents, which seeming to

be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations.

202. To make our reading useful, it should be inclosed between two prayers, at the beginning and the end of it.

203. The chief desire of christian parents should be, for the salvation of their children. Without this, all they do for them serves only to draw the curse of God upon themselves; since they are as guardian angels that ought to conduct to heaven, those to whom they have given life. 'Tis a great mistake to suppose, they can please God by any other good works, while they neglect this.

204. True piety consists in doing, not what we chuse, but what God chuses for us.

205. The holiest men are troubled, when God ever so little turns away his face from them. And from thence arises the necessity of continual watching and prayer.

206. The perfection we are incessantly to press after, is no other than perfect love; and love cannot increase in the soul, but by a disengagement from sensible and pleasing objects. Otherwise our love is false, our courtesy

themselves deceitful, and our condescension to others only a snare to ourselves; because instead of flowing from the love of God, they flow from self-love, and the love of the world.

207. The readiest way which God takes to draw a man to himself is, to afflict him in that which he loves the most, and with good reason; and to cause this affliction to arise from some good action done from a single eye: because nothing can more clearly shew him the emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the world.

208. Separation from the world is the first step towards heaven, and the beginning of our commerce with God, who advances towards us when he sees we estrange ourselves from others to go to him.

209. God does nothing but in answer to prayer: and even those who have been converted to God, without praying for it themselves, (which is exceeding rare) were not, without the prayers of others.

210. As our wants are continual, so should our prayers be, chiefly in the beginning of our good resolutions; as there is no time

wherein we have greater need of peculiar help from God.

211. To prayer should be added continual employment ; for grace flies a vacuum as well as nature, and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

212. One ought to read the holy scripture with so deep a respect, and so absolute a submission, as shew that we are thoroughly persuaded it is the Holy Ghost that speaks. And we ought to receive with all humility what he is pleased to discover to us, to profit thereby, leaving the rest in the treasure of his infinite knowledge. Such reading is no less useful than prayer, and brings a blessing with it, which is the principle of our good works, and of the conduct of our whole life.

213. One of the greatest faults which parents can commit, and which is the source of numberless disorders in families and in common-wealths, is, that instead of bringing up their children as those that are now the children of God, by the second birth, which they received in baptism, they think only of giving them such an education as his suitable to their first birth. They take great care of them as
they

they are children of Adam, but not at all as they are the children of God. Thus they are murderers of their own children; slitting the life of God which was begun in their souls.

214. If we would be obeyed by our domesticks, we must not only command, but endeavour to gain their heart. For God himself, to make himself obeyed, does not barely give commandments, but also inspires his love into the souls of those who are to fulfil them.

215. Uniformity of life and symetry of action, is essential to Christian holiness. It is like a circle, which is considered as the first of figures, because of the equality of all its parts.

216. It is highly dangerous to grow in the knowledge of the things of God, and not in the love of God.

217. God does not love men that are inconstant, nor good works that are intermitted. Nothing is pleasing to him but what has a resemblance of his own immutability.

218. God who is a Spirit, will dwell no where on earth but in our spirits, which are

his palaces. But he doth not consider them as such, unless they are wholly devoted to him.

219. The truly devout shew, that passions as naturally flow from true as from false love : so deeply sensible are they with the goods and evils of those whom they love for God's sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the language of love ; which to all others, how wise or learned soever, is strange and barbarous.

220. Trust in God, who every moment assists those who give themselves up to him. If we will be always thinking of what is past, and what is to come, we shall be under continual apprehensions.

221. To desire to grow in grace, which is the greatest thing in the whole world, and yet not to strive and labour after it, is desiring to establish an order contrary to that of God, which is immoveable as himself.

222. Can we be troubled when we know that God does all, and that not an hair falls from our head, without his permission ?

223. The bottom of our soul may be in repose, even while we are in many outward troubles ;

troubles ; just as the bottom of the sea is calm, while the surface is strongly agitated.

224. Christianity is summed up in being thoroughly willing, that God should treat us in the manner that pleases him. As by becoming Christians we are become his lambs, we ought to be ready to suffer even to the death, without complaining.

225. We ought never to make a law of the advices we give, but leave those to whom they are given to their own choice.

226. God frequently conceals the part which his children have in the conversion of their souls. Yet one may boldly say, that a person who long groans before him for the conversion of another, whenever the soul is converted to God, is one of the chief causes of it : especially if it is a mother who prays and groans for her child.

227. A constant attention to the work with which God entrusts us, is the greatest mark of solid piety.

228. When God afflicts us, we ought, if possible, to add something to our usual exercises of piety, to harden ourselves against
that

that little relaxation which our present circumstance may require.

229. If after having renounced all, we do not incessantly watch over our actions, and beseech God to accompany our vigilance with his, we shall be entangled and overcome.

230. The more pure the heart is, the more capable it is of prayer.

231. When we know the pride of our heart, we should offer it to God, as a sickness which he alone can cure.

232. This is humility, to serve God in the state wherein we are, waiting till he shall make us better.

233. We are to bear with those whom we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. There is no greater exercises of charity than this, nor of true resignation. And since God has borne our infirmities in his own person, we may well bear those of each other for his sake.

234. Seeing Christ has given his life for our salvation, it is just that they who love souls for his sake, sometimes hazard their own

own life for him, to repay some part of his unexampled love.

235. Where there is love, there is humility, long-suffering, patience, and all other virtues meet together; inasmuch as these are only the branches whereof love is the root.

236. Christians generally desire to have only sweet medicines for the distempers of their souls, not considering that we use sharp and bitter ones to cure the diseases of our bodies.

237. Nothing is more to be lamented, than that the wounds of the soul are invisible like herself: and that we are so far from being sensible of them, as soon as we have received them, that for a long time we find pleasure in our misfortune, and fancy we are well, though we are sick unto death.

238. We cannot keep the Spirit of God after we have received it, but by increasing it by constant exercises of piety. Nor can we increase it, but by keeping ourselves at a distance from the world.

239. To abandon all, to strip one's self of all, in order to seek and follow Jesus Christ, naked in Bethlehem when he was born, naked
in

in the hall when he was scourged, and naked when he died on the cross, is so great a mercy, that neither the thing nor the knowledge of it is given to any, but through faith in the Son of God.

240. As devils and the souls of men are both of the same, of a spiritual nature, and accordingly the former well understand what passes in the latter, they find it easy to transmit from one soul to another the corruption and infection they meet with there, by means of the evil conversation and friendly intercourse there is between them.

241. There is no faithfulness like that which ought to be between a true guide of souls and the persons directed by him. They ought continually to regard each other in God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure, and their words conducted with Christian discretion. Other affairs are only the affairs of men, but these are peculiarly the things of God.

242. The fears which the first appearance of the great truths of God raise in the minds of young converts, resemble those which are occasioned at first by the apparition of
good

good angels: but they soon pass away, and leave the soul in peace and joy of the Holy Ghost.

243. Of all conversions, the most apostolical is that which is wrought by the very words of the gospel. By these God has converted both the Jews and Heathens, and has formed and does still form his church.

244. The soul wherein God has shed abroad his grace, no longer knows any language but that of grace.

245. The words of the gospel are the words of life. All others are only dead words.

Whatever vigour they may receive from the eloquence of him that speaks them.

246. Grace renders sweet to the soul not only the harshest truths, hard sayings which we could not bear before, but also the most difficult actions and the most grievous sufferings.

247. Jesus Christ alone opens the ears of his heart; and then we run in his ways after the odour of his ointments.

248. Jesus Christ renews his own life every hour in the bodies and souls of real Christians.

They

They are living images of him, and represent him in a more excellent manner than the writings of the gospel itself, For the dead characters of the gospel (though living in another sense) contain only the past life of Christ; whereas true Christians contain also his present life, and that in living characters: which caused the Apostle to declare, *I live not, but Christ liveth in me.*

249. Every new victory which the soul gains, is the effect of a new prayer.

250. It is very possible for a man to love any of the creatures, without their contributing to it; but it is not possible for him to love God, unless God himself waters him from moment to moment.

251. The clouds which frequently rise in the souls of those who are truly converted to God, do not hinder the continuance of that joy which his presence produces in them; but these clouds are all scattered by the fresh supply of faith, and of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

252. It is not good for a babe in Christ, either to converse much with the world, or to be wholly alone.

253. Em-

253. Employment frequently holds the place of mortification, and produces the same effects.

254. Those who write by the Spirit of God, do not follow their memory so much as their heart.

255. Our continuance in good works is the best means to retain a continual sense of the love of God.

256. We cannot continue in good works, unless we renounce all desire of good works, honours, and pleasures of the world.

257. Let the things of earth roll under our feet, as those of heaven roll over our heads.

258. God hates sloth as much as presumption.

259. It is frequently necessary to serve God, and abandon ourselves to him, though we see but darkly what is his will concerning us, without waiting for particular revelations. For we cannot expect in the order of grace, as in that of reason, to have evidence and demonstration at every step.

260. Truth cannot so well be found by disputing, as by holy meditation.

261. Every

261. Every one has his peculiar gift from God, according to which he ought to conduct himself. At the same time he should labour with sobriety, to acquire the knowledge of divine things, so he does it with a single eye, that he may profit thereby, and be more deeply grounded in love.

262. They that cannot fast one way, may fast another. And those who are truly devoted to God, have a great liberty, to do or not to do those outward things which are in themselves indifferent.

263. The sympathies formed by grace, far surpass those formed by nature.

264. The love of God leads us first to the true love of ourselves, and thence to the love of our neighbour.

265. It is good to renew ourselves from time to time, by closely examining the state of our soul, as if we had never been renewed before. For nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves by humility and the exercise of all this means in good works.

266. God consults us only according to what we are in our hearts, in the secret move-

movements of our soul, in our hidden intentions and our passions imperceptible to others. The goodness of all our works depends on the purity and simplicity of our heart, which is as it were the spirit, the invisible soul of this visible body.

267. We should disengage ourselves from all those pleasures, which if otherwise innocent, yet fill the capacity of the heart, which should be filled by grace only.

268. If we do not devote all we do to God, there is nothing in our best works but what is human or pagan: because we regard only ourselves therein, and while we do what is good in appearance, we in effect put ourselves by a secret self-complaisance in the place of God.

269. In the greatest temptations, a single look to Jesus Christ, or the bare pronouncing his name, suffices to overcome the wicked one, so it be done with confidence and calmness of spirit.

270. There is nothing either in earth or hell that can possibly hurt a soul, which regards Jesus Christ, with a lively faith, either in his death, or in his resurrection.

271. Thanksgiving is as it were the soul of prayer, with which it should begin, continue and end.

272. The hindrances of our thankfulness, when we conquer them, increase instead of diminishing it.

273. God frequently gives a soul that ardently loves him, a dispensation from those laborious works, which it would do, to testify its gratitude, by laying obstacles in the way which makes them impossible.

274. In souls filled with love, that desire to please God, is a continual prayer.

275. Nothing is more true, than that *the yoke of Christ is easy, and his burden light*. For one need only love, to fulfil the whole law, even when it cannot be outwardly accomplished. And yet it is true, that this dispensation from outward works which proceeds from providential hindrances, is often a greater trial to souls full of love, than the most painful of those works would have been.

276. God does not always suffer himself to be overcome by his children (as he was by Jacob) in the secret combats of faith and love, wherein they wrestle with him. He

often remains victorious over the soul, which desire to labour, to suffer, to die for him; that he may attach her more and more to his love by hindering the effects of that love which she bears him. But however the combat is, she is so much the happier, through the increase of her love by those very oppositions, as torrents are raised by the obstacles which they meet with. And the faith which guides her love, gives her to understand that she succeeds in the most excellent manner, by contributing to the success of God's designs, by the disappointment of her own.

277. God only requires of his adult children, that their hearts be thoroughly purified, and that they offer him continually the wishes and vows that naturally spring from perfect love. For these desires being the first genuine fruits of love, are the most perfect prayers which can spring from it.

278. The necessity of continual watching unto prayer rises hence, that the devil is continually watching to surprise us, and to destroy us by those very victories which we gain over him.

279. As the furious hate which the devil bears us, is termed the roaring of that lion, so our vehement love may be termed, crying after God.

280. Those who know the greatness and holiness of the church, count nothing therein little.

281. On every occasion of uneasiness, we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God, and then form our resolutions, without being in any pain what success they may have.

282. Those who closely follow God, easily judge of the manner wherein they ought to act in spiritual things. They need walk but a little in the strait way, to see before them the light which disperses the clouds.

283. Nothing of that which is in the order of God, ought to be accounted troublesome.

284. A soul returned to God, ought to be attentive to every thing which is said to him on the head of salvation, with a secret desire to profit thereby.

285. The whole life of grace consists in dependance upon God.

286. There

286. There is no surer mark of a true conversion than to be greatly tempted of the devil. The best means of overcoming him is, to have no dependance upon ourselves, but to throw ourselves wholly upon God, with an absolute dependance on his will.

287. The *just shall live by faith*. By his continual regard to God he draws those graces and influences from heaven, without which the most righteous man upon earth could not subsist one moment.

288. Ignorance of the truths which exalt God, and abase man, (convinced that in whatever state he is, he has continual need of new grace, which God gives to those only that humble themselves more and more) has caused the ruin of many, who were much admired in their first stages of their conversion.

289. Jesus Christ becoming man out of love to us, satisfied the justice of his Father, by an humility, an obedience and a patience as incomprehensible in the human nature, as God in his divine nature, was, is, and always will be, to all but himself.

290. We ought to desire the Lord's supper with the same earnestness as we desire to

preserve the health we enjoy, or to recover that we have lost.

291. He to whom the Lord's supper serves chiefly for food, should prepare himself by another food, the word of God. He to whom it serves chiefly for a medicine, should prepare himself for it by repentance.

292. God imposes one kind of penance on every penitent, by giving his various afflictions; and another kind, in the unavoidable inconveniences which attend every calling whatever. And none is duly prepared for the Lord's supper, but he that acquires himself well in affliction and in his calling.

293. None is duly prepared for it, who does not daily examine the ground of his conscience, with an earnest desire to judge himself that he may not be judged of the Lord.

294. They whom God has preserved from gross sins, ought to have tender compassion and great patience toward those whom God has suffered to fall into them, and whom he has left in them for a season. It is thus they are to shew their humility and gratitude to God, and their charity to their neighbour.

295. OF

295. Of the sins which God has pardoned, let nothing remain but a deeper humility in our heart, and a stricter regulation in our words, in our actions, and in our sufferings.

296. A natural goodness and easiness of temper, often hinder our growing in grace; making us do almost all good works rather from inclination, than by the Spirit of God.

297. Examples are to be followed with caution; but the gospel rules without reserve. St. Paul advises to follow him, only so far as he followed Christ.

298. It is of no use to love the brightness of truth, unless we shew the warmth of it in our practice.

299. The warmth of love resembles that of the heart, which extends itself to the smallest parts of the body.

300. If the love of God does not increase in us, in the same degree as we increase in knowledge, the stronger principle will overcome the weaker, and knowledge will stifle love. This has occasioned men of the greatest learning, almost to envy their happiness, who know little, but love much.

301. The body increases without decreasing, till it comes to a certain age. But there is no limited time wherein the soul may not either increase or decrease.

302. Silence of spirit consists in cutting off all vain and useless thoughts.

303. One may be intemperate in speaking as well as in eating. And as after we have fasted long, we are apt to eat too much, so are we to speak too much after we have been long silent.

304. It is not reasonable to desire they should love us, who do not love God.

305. We should every day gain something upon ourselves, and be a little more disengaged from the objects that surround us.

306. When we should counsel our friends, silence is no less blameable than indifference.

307. The holy scripture is the mirror, wherein we see God, and wherein we may see the smallest spots upon our souls.

308. Death is the greatest affair of human life. We must prepare for it while we are in rest and health.

309. In whatever way of life we are, we depend on the mercy of God. And it is far better

better humbly to trust in him, though with something of uncertainty, than to trust in ourselves with the uttermost assurance. Adam, left to himself, fell. Whereas thousands of his offspring, though sinful, and feeble, stand through the grace of Jesus Christ.

310. If one cannot faithfully serve an earthly prince without exposing himself to many dangers in his court, and to death in his armies, it is far more reasonable than that those who serve God in the church, which is the court of his Son, should expose themselves to all the dangers, that suffer all the evils that occur in his service: especially as he who has established this kingdom, was himself hated of men, and has foretold, that the war, which they who preached the gospel after him, need make upon the world, would cause them likewise to be hated of all men, for his name's sake.

311. A true guide of souls, ought to be as the heart, the tongue, and the hand of God, to labour by his assistance for the salvation of them that are under his care. For it is not he that prays, that speaks, that withes, strives, suffers; but it is the Spirit of God
which

which does all this, when the minister is united to him, and calls upon him continually.

312. There is this difference in the ministers of the church and of the world, that the latter assume pomp and grandeur, whereas the former are always covered with charity and humility.

313. There ought nothing to come out of the mouth or the heart of a preacher of the gospel, but what is not only reasonable but christian, and animated by the Holy Spirit.

314. Between the physicians of the soul, and those of the body, there is a great difference in this. The latter are more and more hardened, by the sight of more patients and diseases; whereas the hearts of the former, by the sight of spiritual diseases, grow more and more tender.

315. A man must have courage more than human, to make war on all the world, both within him and without him.

316. The only way to undertake the preaching the gospel is, To enter upon it by the inspiration of God, without having any regard to the world or of what is either agreeable or disagreeable in it, and to forget
even

even our own house and relations just as Abraham did, in order to love God alone, as if he alone were our world, our relations, our all.

317. It is the glory of all true ministers of Christ to resemble the angels of God. They nearly resemble them, by having renounced the body, in order to regard the soul only; by their life all spiritual, uniform throughout, all from God, all for God, and all proceeding from the Spirit of God, as is that of the angels in heaven.

318. The government of souls, particularly in that which regards the spiritual life, is not a government of dominion and empire, but of love and tenderness. It consists in following the movements of God in the persons committed to us, after having discerned by his light, that these movements come from him.

319. God is the master of souls: he moves and guides them as he pleases, according to the depth of his judgments. We who are only his servants, and helpers of these souls, depend far more on what he works in them, than they do upon us.

320. He

320. He who is honoured with the ministry, ought to be and appear as far separate from common Christians, as common Christians ought to be and to appear separate from Heathens.

321. A preacher should earnestly beg of God, that his being accustomed to sacred offices may no ways abate the solemn awe which he at first experienced in them. There is the utmost need that he should have as much of this to the end (if not more) as at the beginning.

322. It is often improper to declare our sentiments hastily and abruptly. It may put it out of our power to defend the truth; at least with any profit.

323. Ministers, above all other men, should have those words continually before their eyes, *The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

324. The dispensation which God indispensibly requires of all that would minister his word, excludes every other design but that which springs from his grace and the motion of his Spirit.

325. Christ

325. Christ has always reserved in his church some ministers who bear in their souls the character of his divinity, so as to do nothing which is not suitable to his greatness, and far distant from the corruption which not only overflows the world, but even the church, the generality of his ministers.

326. None ought to believe himself worthy of the ministry.

327. A minister ought to avoid contention.

328. Nothing increases grace so much as the ministry, when it is exercised by the Spirit of God.

329. Faith has a peculiar force in a house where several souls consecrated to God are joined together.

330. The life of a minister ought to be uniform to render it exemplary. And if his example does not edify the world, neither will his writing benefit the church.

331. When we speak to others of the things of God, we ought always to speak to ourselves, so as to take to ourselves at least an equal part of the instructions which we give them.

332. Those

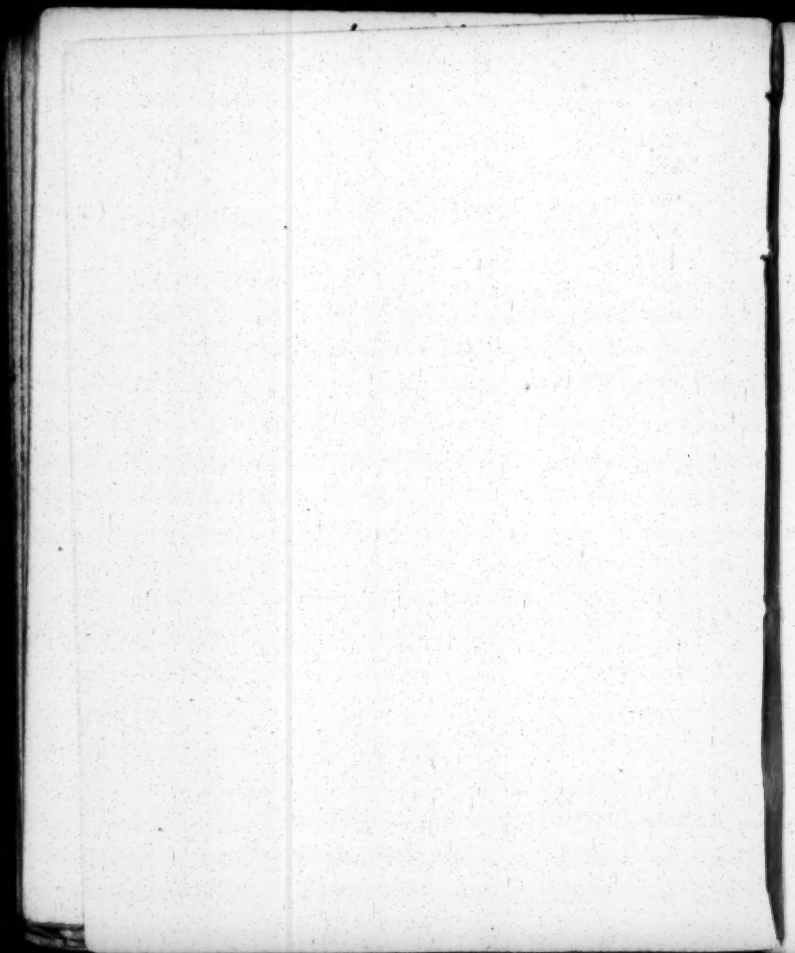
332. Those who have surmounted the desire of the flesh, have still to surmount that of the tongue and of the understanding; particularly at this time, wherein knowledge is so frequently found separate from virtue.

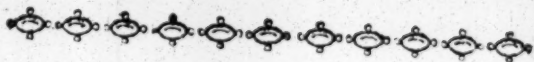
333. When any one writes for God, he should seek for no other eloquence than that which God gives in the simplicity of his Spirit. He would corrupt this, were he to mix it with human eloquence: and he should never forget, before, in, and after his work, to cry to God, that he may have his heart continually lifted up to him, who ought to be the source of all the thoughts, and all the conversation of every minister.

334. While a man is alienated from God, he makes little account of that natural inclination which such a one has to some good works, or his aversion to some sins. But from the moment that he is converted to God, he sanctifies this inclination and this aversion, and serves himself of it in order to increase: and nevertheless, the ease with which we do those good works, and avoid those evil ones, does not at all diminish the
reward

reward or value of them. Thus what was only virtuous Heathenism before, becomes true Christian virtue, by the infusion of love, which is in us as it were a second soul, all divine, and which transforms into itself that which before animated the body.

336. How clear-sighted soever a man is in other respects, he hardly sees all that love requires to be done, whether in respect of God or his neighbour, but while he feels that love in his heart.





INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

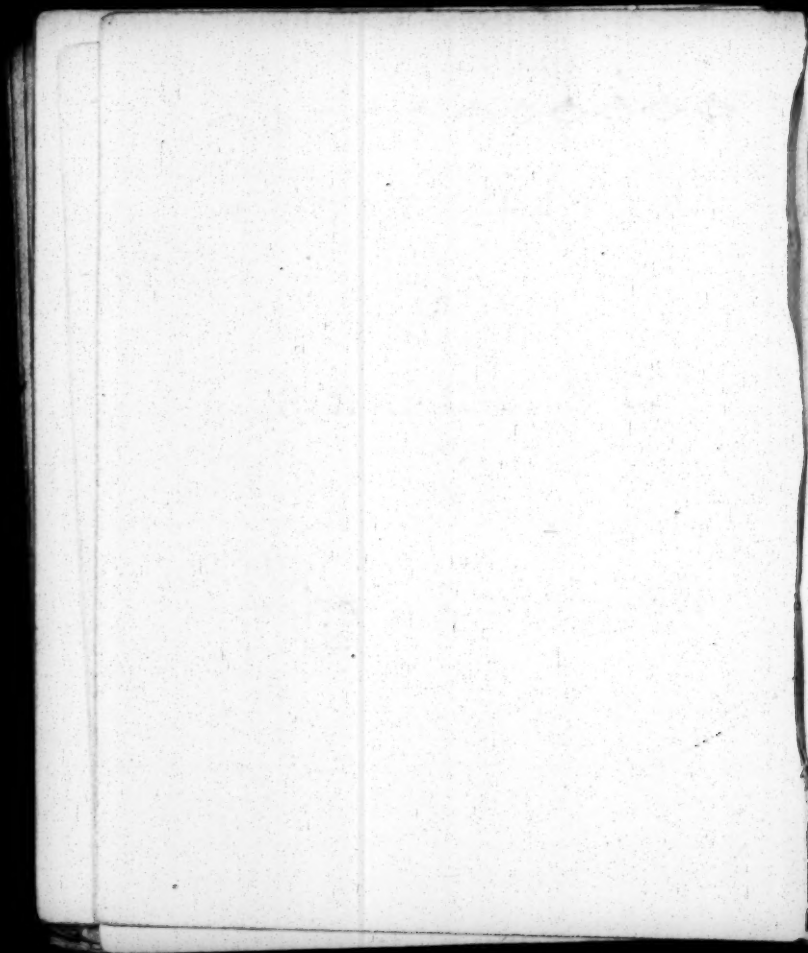
MEMBERS

OF

Religious Societies.



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I N S T R U C T I O N S

F O R

M E M B E R S, &c.

1. **M** E M B E R S of religious societies, who ought to be so holy, who have so many helps for becoming so, frequently fall short of it, through the excessive confidence they are taught to place in external rules. They do not know that true holiness flows neither from the will, nor from the efforts of man. They are not sensible that their corruption is above all remedies except only the grace of Christ: that all outward helps reach not the deep and invisible wound of the heart, and that they are desperately sick, who fancy they can be cured by their own cares or labours. These do not hold by

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the root of all true good, which is Jesus Christ. They are severed from the principle of health and life : and it is for this reason that they are so weak, sometimes so sensual, and always so proud, because they do not receive that influence which gives strength, purity, and humility, in the spirit of grace and love. This is therefore highly needful for them to consider, that neither *the staff of the prophet* nor *his servant* is able to raise the dead : but only the prophet himself stretched upon the body ; that is, Christ become man for us.

2. It is of deep importance, that they should understand the connexion there is between their vows and the gospel.* Suppose they did not vow Obedience to their Superior, they must dread their own will at the source of all vices. For in any state we are not at our own disposal, we are not so live to ourselves, or permitted to rest in ourselves, or to be our own rule and end. We ne d not make a Vow of Poverty ; but

* This letter was originally designed for those of a Religious House in France.

in every state the love of riches is forbidden; covetousness is idolatry; and trust in our goods is incompatible with a due trust in God. We must limit ourselves to the necessities of nature; dispense the rest with the most exact fidelity, and use even what we allow ourselves as though we used it not. We need not bind ourselves to a single Life: but the laws of chastity are so strict in every state; faults of this kind are so dangerous: the occasion of them are so frequent in the world; and it is so just to be afraid of that sin which may be committed even by a look, that it is easier to abstain from all, than to stop precisely at the point where innocence ends. See what is the ground of resolving upon a single life. And we should infinitely deceive ourselves, if we regarded chastity as a thing indifferent before we made the resolution. The dangers we are in, an holy fear, the care of an inestimable treasure lodged in a brittle vessel, and the desire of pleasing Christ by giving him an undivided heart, were, or ought to have been, our only motives for making such a resolution. It is because we do not conceive this, that we are

so little guarded against the tender connexions, and so feebly resist that desire of pleasing; so often attach ourselves to persons whom we ought not to see, but in order to become more pure; that we nourish in our hearts a thousand useless and frivolous desires; suffer our comfort to depend on the most trifling things; and fall into the incomprehensible folly of having renounced what is lawful, the love of a spouse, of children, to put silly, little, forbidden attachments in the place of the innocent and even holy ties.

3. Observe the difference between the rules which are merely of human authority and the laws of God. The former may on several occasions be dispensed with; whereas the laws of God are indispensable; nor can their obligation be weakened either by custom, or by example, or authority. Neither can we excuse ourselves on account of ignorance, because that ignorance itself is a sin. Accordingly we may not on any pretence lose time in trifling discourse, love worthless things, suffer ourselves to be betrayed into murmuring and impatience, or follow our pride, or self-will in any thing. These would

would be sins, though we were not so peculiarly devoted to God : and our profession of religion only adds a new degree of guilt to them.

4. It is then of great moment to distinguish between those rules which seem purely arbitrary, and those which all must impose upon themselves, if they propose to save their souls. Such are stated hours of private prayer, reading, and meditation ; constant and serious employment ; plain and modest apparel, and a carriage still more plain and modest ; a steady uniformity of behaviour ; following the counsel of some guide who is taught of God ; an habitual dread of softness and pleasure, and a love of penitence. Nothing of this is arbitrary. Piety partly consists in these things, partly depends upon them. If you was in no religious society, you would be equally obliged to these ; but you would be deprived of the valuable helps of rule, of instruction, and of example, which you now enjoy.

5. And even those rules which appear quite arbitrary and indifferent, are usually necessary in order to the keeping of others, as the husk

preserves the corn, and as the letter preserves the spirit. It seems indeed to men of the world, that these are little things: but pride and worldly wisdom are ill judges of what is little or great in the eyes of God. There are abundance of things necessary in order to discipline, precious helps for humility and fervency of spirit, which the world despises, but which the children of God know the value of.

6. Above all things, we must labour to convince ourselves thoroughly, that we can never fill up the characters of a life consecrated to the service of God, without an universal renunciation of all things; yet it avails nothing to shut all the other gates, if we leave one open for the devil; yet we only make him rage the more, unless we resist him more valiantly in every point: that the least vice indulged brings back all the rest: that the self-love which leads us to accept any thing, leads us afterwards to resume all; yet whatever takes up a part of our heart, necessarily wounds and weakens it: that all parting it, when we owe and have promised the whole, is no less than sacrilege: that the
death

death of Ananias ought to make all those tremble, who keep back a part: that the command to Lot and his wife, *Not to look back*, is renewed by Christ in the gospel: that it is easy, by our desires, to turn back to the world: and that one cannot even thus return to it, without rendering ourselves unworthy to enter into the promised land: that we cannot conceive the fury of the devil against those who undertake to live an angelic life in a mortal body: we cannot conceive therefore how necessary it is to redouble our vigilance against his unwearied efforts, and to be as unwearied and as diligent as him; otherwise he must prevail.

7. Let us be thoroughly persuaded, that Christianity implies a general opposition to all the false notions of the world, to its maxims and sentiments, that it knows no other pattern than Jesus Christ and him crucified: that his disgraces and griefs are all its riches, and all its consolations; that consequently nothing is more opposite thereto than pride and the love of pleasures, and that the only way for Christians to become great is to be
sincerely

sincerely willing to be the least of all; that is, the most unknown, the most despised, the most dependant, the least accommodated, and yet the most patient and the most satisfied; not through an idea of our own virtue, which would be the height of pride, but from a consciousness of our own unworthiness, and from a deep love of the truth, which makes us sensible of it.

8. Let us take care to preserve all the fervor and all the exactness which we find in the community, to look upon ourselves as charged with this depositum, and obliged to transmit it to others; never to give it the least shock, either by our example or advice; to be infinitely afraid of the great guilt implied in weakening piety or regularity in any point: to tremble at the thought of the fatal consequences that the least relaxations draw after them, which are usually without remedy, and which terribly swell the account of those which open the door for them. It is often but a small thing, in appearance: but all is precious and important; and a person devoted to God is to look upon nothing as little or indifferent.

9. Be

9. Be convinced of the necessity of leading a serious life, and of loving none but serious employments: regard every thing which is but a frivolous spending of time, as an amusement unworthy of you: fly every employment which conduces only to luxury or vanity: refuse not that which is troublesome and humbling: place your honour, not in being served, but in serving others; labour usefully, as far as ever your strength will permit: have nothing of little, of weak, of childish, in your inclinations; have on the contrary, something grand and manly in your sentiments, raised above the weakness of your sex,* which naturally leads to amusements and trifles.

10. Accustom yourselves to do nothing without design, without reflection, without a lively sentiment of piety: not to suffer any of your actions to be lost; not to lose the fruit of any of your prayers: never to appear before God in public service, without summoning all your faith; to esteem nothing great, but for the holy dispositions with which it is per-

* This was originally written for Women.

formed :

formed: never to separate your actions or your sufferings from those of Jesus Christ, from which they derive all their value; to count for nothing at all, either virtue or wisdom, which is not grounded on Jesus Christ, which has more of show than of truth, which swells the self-love, not the love of God; to distrust all virtues which do not render you more humble, more detached from yourselves, more ready to yield to all the world: to dread in that which is good, the vain satisfaction which is almost inseparable, and which is the poison of it: to be truly humbled by your faults; to preserve with great care, the desire of future bliss, the sense of the mercies of God, the remembrance of your sins and miseries, and the spirit of compunction, which is the very soul of religion.

11. Guard early against the temptations and dangers which might one day weaken you. Few continue as they have begun; fewer advance in virtue. There are even in the most holy retreats, what are almost certain means of enfeebling the soul: and it is a great misfortune, either not to know them,

them, or when one does know them, not to guard against them. It is impossible to set down here, every thing which may slacken the soul. A thousand imperceptible ways, a thousand insensible declensions, a thousand slight losses, a thousand secret snares, may occasion this. Natural inconstancy and fickleness, luke-warmness in prayer, union with persons that are not fervent in spirit, attachment to any thing wrong, which God punishes, the slighting of little duties, of little faults, of the checks of an enlightened conscience; the forgetting the reasons and motives which induced us to chuse the state wherein we are; a secret disgust at our superior; too quick a sense of some slight or refusal; too great liberty in examining the defects of our brethren; listening to murmurers; any secret unfaithfulness not acknowledged; any thing done with a doubting conscience; any temptation on which we have not had the humility to ask advice; any fear of raillery in doing our duty; any slight dissipation; but above all any secret pride: for it is this sin which almost always leads to
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the rest. And one cannot too much recommend to them who would be all devoted to God, an humility proportioned to the graces they have need of, in order to advance in virtue and persevere to the end.

12. Labour to extinguish in yourself, to the very root, the desire to please, which sinks even to the marrow, and which is the most invincible obstacle to the pure love of God. This driven out on one side, returns on another. It lives equally on vice and on virtue: it does not forget the body, but to avail itself more of the qualities of the mind: it is humble and yet fierce: it is full of self-will, and affects to will nothing: it often deceives itself, and is the source of a thousand errors and seductions.—Happy he who is aware of such an enemy, who combats it sincerely, yet who has no hopes of conquering it otherwise than by the almighty grace of Jesus Christ. All the imperfections of religious societies, all their irregularities, flow from this poisoned fountain. Where discipline is wanting, it produces gross evils. It produces evils no less dangerous, though spiritual,
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 wherever

wherever true piety is not sufficiently known, and where the depth of human misery is covered, not healed by superficial remedies.

13. As persons usually know only the outside of chastity, and are little informed of its inward ground and its extent, it is of importance to consider, that this virtue resides chiefly in the heart; that it extinguishes all desire to have a place in the heart of another; that it is an enemy to pleasure, to all that gratifies the senses, to all superfluity, to all that satisfies curiosity or softness, to all that weakens the soul and makes it bend earthward, to all that wounds the most severe modesty, to all that disturbs the peace and tranquillity necessary for prayer, to all that is capable of creating or recalling dangerous images; in fine, to all that strengthens the chains which attach the soul to the body, and the inclination which it is so hard to lay aside, of seeking our repose in sensible things.

14. In order to be agreeable in a family, we ought not to suffer in ourselves any defect which we can correct. We should be neat in our clothes, in our chamber, in all that we do either for ourselves or others. Our gait,

gait, our way of speaking, our whole behaviour, should be reformed with care. There may be much of simplicity therein, and yet much of dignity. We should not give ourselves leave to laugh, to speak, to admire any thing, in a flat and disgussing manner. We should carefully avoid every thing that is coarse, clownish, or indecent, and every way of expressing joy or friendship which is not quite well-bred and modest. Shun becomes little habits which give pain to others, and which age and negligence may increase. Accustom yourself to reflect upon every thing which might incommode another; to avoid with care and not to slide into it either through hurry or forgetfulness. On the other side, we ought to bear with sweetness whatever incommodes us in another; to exact nothing; to excuse every thing, and to be patient ourselves and studious for the good of the family, purely from a motive of Christian love; regarding as mere worldly politeness whatever is done with a lower view, as from purely human motives.

15. The chief dispositions of mind, which are necessary in every member of a Christian family,

family, are goodnels, sweetness, patience, the desire of obliging, the fear of grieving or hurting any one, a care to preserve love in himself and others; a pain to see any breach therein: humanity toward the weak either in mind or in body; a joy in taking the burdens of others upon ourselves; a love of the religious exercises which are performed in common; an avoiding all needless singularity: an unspeakable aversion to complaints and murmurs; a sincere, respectful and tender union, first with our superior, and afterwards with all our brethren. We cannot but bestow different degrees of love and esteem upon these, according to their different gifts and graces. But we should be very wary, as to the marks whereby we shew our inward preference of some to others.



Directions to preserve Fervency of Spirit.

1. **I**F we would preserve our fervor unabated, we must particularly attend to those things which at all times led to weariness

ness and weakness of spirit, and to those which tend to inspire zeal and fervor, and to rekindle languid desires. We should regard the former as certain mischiefs, whatever pretences may be made to excuse them, and the latter as invaluable helps, however little or trifling they may appear to false wisdom.

2. Frequently reflect on the insensible decays by which our piety is weakened. Dread the consequences of the least relaxations, which at the beginning appear so far removed from the point to which they lead. Be assured, that all faults which are neglected are punished, the little ones by great, the inward by outward, lukewarmness by insensibility. Be always faithful to your conscience, to the first cry of charity, to that clear decision which you hear in your heart upon every duty. Do not confound with your reason this supreme rule of reason. Reverence it as the voice of God. Do not deliberate on the obedience you owe to it. Give no entrance to the enemy, by reasoning upon any command or prohibition of the Holy Spirit. By resisting the beginning of temptations, you easily conquer them, whereas after the

first moment you are almost disarmed and vanquished.

3. Love prayer, and do all that in you lies, that it may be continual. We receive nothing from God but by this: it is the hand that knocks and that receives. The gifts of God do not come to us without this: when this languishes all is languid: and it is always by lukewarmness in prayer, that we fall into that general lukewarmness which is without remedy.

4. Prize the holy and happy liberty of your state: * the freedom from every other duty, but that of loving and serving Christ; the exemption from the pain of the first woman, though you have had a part in her sin. Be thankful to God, that he has brought you to an asylum, of which your weakness had so great need: where the eyes of a whole community enlighten and observe you; where you are animated by example: and where the infirmities of others exercise your patience

* That of a single life. This tract too was originally directed to single women, living in one community.

and

and feed your charity. Beware you be not like the Israelites of old, who *thought scorn of the pleasant land*; and do not give way to the least desire of turning back into Egypt.

5. Check every thought which tends to this, under what pretence soever it comes. It is a dangerous temptation, to dwell on some rule which we dislike, and would have taken away; on certain defects, which are common in societies, which lead insensibly to repent on being joined therein; on the weakness, the ignorance, the want of understanding or of education in such and such, who therefore cannot be of use to us; on a discipline which sometimes appears useless, embarrassing, contrary to the liberty of the Spirit of God: on something either uneven or imprudent in the conduct of our superiors: in a word, on any thing which abates the love of our state, and tends to extinguish our thankfulness for it. All these thoughts should be repress'd, the moment they appear. If we give them an hearing, we are fallen: and if the heart is not exactly closed against them, they surprise and poison it.

6. Make

6. Make it a point of duty, to do nothing out of humour, **that** is, without any reason but inclination. Be faithful in the use of every means, independently on relish or dis-relish. When you are heavy, look for the return of grace and unction: when you have most fervor, prepare for temptation. Look on these inward vicissitudes as you do on those of bodily health. Do not neglect them; and yet beware of being discouraged thereby. Only redouble your diligence and your care in proportion to the length and violence of your trials. And from the moment that light appears again, be so humble and so thankful that you may keep it.

7. The esteem, confidence, and friendship of others serve only to weaken you, if they lessen that compunction and contempt of yourself which is the source of true strength. Unless love or necessity require it, be not forward to talk of those things which you know the best. Esteem simplicity and purity of heart more than the finest understanding. Do not cherish the desire of either having or shewing this. Never shew in your conversation an air of capacity and sufficiency.

Cure the prejudices of persons less enlightened than you, by a modest, calm, loving behaviour, and draw no other advantage from being more knowing, than that of being more humble.

8. Be sweet, even, courteous, from a motive of faith and love, not from a desire to please. The more capable virtues of this kind are of attracting esteem and friendship, the more vigilance and jealousy over ourselves is needful, that they may be pure and holy. For it is easy to seduce the heart of others, even though we are clear ourselves. And it is a great affliction to one who loves God, to be the occasion of another's loving him less, or in a less noble and less perfect manner.

9. Regard then those advantages which draw love and esteem, only as snares and sources of temptation, without that extraordinary grace which is seldom given, because men are seldom humble enough to obtain it. Be abased before God for whatever distinguishes you in the sight of men; as it exposes you to pride, the most shameful of all vices in a poor, sinful wretch. Esteem only that which God esteems; praise only that
which

which he praises. Make little account of all the shining virtues which are found even in reprobates. Regard piety and humility as the only ones which distinguish the children of God from the children of wrath.

10. Preserve with the utmost care, the spirit of piety, recollection, watchfulness, and compunction. Do nothing in haste and with dissipation. Speak nothing but what is necessary. Never speak without watching over your words, and the motive which leads you to speak. Talk not even on useful subjects but with a single eye; otherwise you may lose the treasure which is in your heart by shewing it from a wrong motive.

11. Let none of your actions, not even the smallest, be lost. Do them all from views which springs from faith. Accordingly know why you do them. Do not walk by chance, without seeing your mark, or without aiming at it. Despise nothing, because every action may become of great price. Make all noble, all grand, all divine. Nothing is little when one loves much, and nothing is great when one loves but little.

12. When

12. When you are doing a thing, never depend on doing it better another time; but at this time give it all possible attention. When you are doing one thing, do not think on another that is to follow it. Always limit yourself to the present moment, and distrust projects which cause you to slight the present work, by promising wonders in time to come.

13. Esteem no virtues, if they do not spring from the Spirit of Christ; if they are not an effect of his grace: if they do not terminate in him. Reason and wisdom separate from faith are mere folly; and pride under the disguise of virtue is vice still. While we abide in the heart of Christ we are alive; if we are out of this divine fountain of all good, out of this vine, we can bear no fruit, or none which deserves any thing but death.

14. Do not wait till the evening before you examine all your actions and all your motives. Keep one part of your soul continually attentive on what the other does. Let not your whole soul be taken up with any thing
except

except prayer, which is then most pure when one least reflects upon it. Never lose serenity of mind and peace of heart; because when your soul is ruffled you no longer know what you do, whither you go, nor where your danger lies. Stop the very moment you begin to be no longer your own master. That moment fly to prayer, and continue therein till peace returns to your soul.

15. Do not love your faults, but love the profitable humiliation which follows them. Let none of them pass lightly over; but do not strive to correct them out of pride. Be more afraid of the glare of virtue, and the admiration it draws, than of your greatest infirmities: for the greatest of sins is pride of heart and a vain satisfaction in your own righteousness, of which those outward imperfections may be the remedy. When you fall into any of them, you ought immediately to think of God, and not of men; quietly to stay yourself on him, and not sink still lower by being disheartened, or by an evil shame. Regard that indignation against yourself which you are then apt to feel, as a greater
evil

evil than that which occasioned it. And you have reason to be afraid, lest if their smaller faults only enflame the mind of which they should be the remedy, they should be followed by others of a deeper nature, as the punishment of it.

16. Never be under so much apprehension as when you do any good, when you speak with wisdom and reason; because you are then on the brink of that most slippery and dangerous precipice, vanity. After having felt more fervor and enlargement of heart in any ordinance, or having suffered any thing with more patience and sweetness than usual, labour to be more humble; for the devil is watching to steal away the fruit as soon as it appears; and it is just in God to suffer it so to be, if you are robbing him of his glory. Always receive commendations and marks of esteem with a secret reluctance, for fear lest God should blast these vain applauses with an hidden curse. On the contrary, esteem yourself happy in being neglected, despised, yea, reproached, how severely soever; because

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cause God generally shews himself most present and most gracious at those precious moments.

LONDON, Feb. 26, 1768.

F I N I S.

